

ROBIN WHITE

[born 1946 Ngāti Awa, New Zealand]

This is me at Kaitangata 1979

Screenprint on paper

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 1979

I have let my hair down to remind myself, and the viewer, that this is a girl who has reconciled her femininity with feeling at home behind a shovel.

– Robin White, 2000

It's 1979, and Robin White stands in front of her cottage in the coal-mining settlement of Kaitangata, South Otago.

White says this confident self-portrait marked 'a sort of coming of age'. She was 33, a full-time artist, and earning a living from her work.

The image alludes to aspects of White's identity. Her ring affirms her faith – she held Bahá'í meetings at the cottage. Her pose is based on a photograph of her father, Albert Tikitū White, as a rowing champion.

E tautau noa ana ōku makawe kia mahara au – otirā te kaimātakitaki hoki – e taunga ana tēnei tamāhine ki tōna wahinetanga me ngā mahi a te ringa raupā.

– Robin White, 2000

Ko te 1979 te tau, ā, kei te tū a Robin White ki mua i tōna whare ki te kāinga kerī waro o Kaitangata, ki te Tonga o Ōtākou.

Hei tā White, he tohu te māia o tōna āhua ki roto i tēnei whakaahua kiriaro o tōna 'whanaketanga'. E 33 tau tōna pakeke, ā, e whai mahi ana, e whai pūtea ana hoki ia i āna mahi toi.

E mau ana tēnei pikitia i ētahi o ngā āhuatanga nui o te tuakiri o White. He tohu te rīngi mō tōna whakapono, arā, mō te Bahá'í. Ka tū ngā huihuinga o tōna whakapono ki tōna whare. E whai ana te āhua o tōna tū i tērā o tōna pāpā, o Albert Tikitū White, i roto i tētahi whakaahua i te wā i whakawhiwhia ia ki tētahi tohu mō te hoe waka.

ROBIN WHITE

[born 1946 Ngāti Awa, New Zealand]

Mangaweka 1973

Oil on canvas

Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, purchased 1994 with New Zealand Lottery Grants Board funds

In 1971, Robin White took a road trip in her VW Beetle to visit friends with poet Sam Hunt. On a brief stop in Mangaweka, Manawatū, she noticed a driverless Bedford truck outside an old building. White immediately took a photo: 'I saw the painting before I ever painted it.'

Mangaweka inspired Hunt too – he wrote a poem about this small rural town:

No place more I'd like to bring you
than this one-pub town
approached in low gear down
the gorges through the hills.

– Sam Hunt, 'A Mangaweka Road Song' (extract), 1971

I te tau 1971, ka haere a Robin White rāua ko te ringa toikupu, ko Sam Hunt, ki te toro atu ki ōna hoa mā runga i tōna VW Beetle. Ka tū rāua ki Mangaweka i Manawatū, ā, ka kite a White i tētahi taraka, he Bedford, e tū kau ana ki waho atu o tētahi koroua whare. Tere tonu tana kapo ake mā te kāmera: 'I kite au i te mahi peita i mua noa atu i te tānga.'

Ka whakaawea hoki a Hunt e Mangaweka – nāna tētahi toikupu i tuhi mō tēnei tāone iti:

No place more I'd like to bring you
than this one-pub town
approached in low gear down
the gorges through the hills.

– Nā Sam Hunt, 'A Mangaweka Road Song' (he wāhi), 1971

ROBIN WHITE

[born 1946 Ngāti Awa, New Zealand]

Sam Hunt, Bottle Creek 1973

Oil on canvas

The University of Auckland Art Collection

In 1969, poet Sam Hunt lived in this small cottage at Bottle Creek on Pāuatahanui Inlet, near Porirua. Robin White moved to a bach behind his cottage that year and became a teacher at Mana College. She was 22.

Bottle Creek was the lively hub of a creative community of artists and writers. White, Hunt and friends created The Bottle Press to publish affordable, illustrated poetry broadsheets. White modelled this portrait of Hunt on the medieval altarpieces she had seen in books – triptychs where ‘wings’ frame the scene in the central panel. This format was also practical, as she could work on only one panel at a time in her tiny bach.

I te tau 1969, e noho ana a Sam Hunt i roto i tēnei whare iti ki Bottle Creek, ki Pāuatahanui i Porirua. I taua tau anō, ka hūnuku a Robin White ki tētahi atu whare iti kei muri i a ia, ā, ka riro i a White tētahi tūranga kaiwhakaako ki Mana College. E 22 ōna tau.

E koropupū ake ana ngā wai o Bottle Creek i ngā mahinga auaha o tētahi kāhui o ngā ringatoi me ngā kaituhi. Ka whakatū a White rātou ko Hunt, ko ō rāua hoa i tētahi wharetā, arā, ko The Bottle Press te ingoa. Ka whakaputa rātou i ngā tānga toikupu e whakapaipaitia ana e te pikitia, he māmā anō te utu. Kua whai a White i te taura i kite ia i roto i ngā pukapuka mō ngā whakairo o ngā tūahu Pākehā tawhito hei waihanga i tēnei whakaahua kiritangata o Hunt – e karapotia ana te papa toi o waenganui e ngā ‘parirau’. He take hoki o tēnei momo hanganga, nā te whāiti o tōna whare, i āhei ia ki te hanga i te papa toi kotahi anake i roto i tōna whare iti.

ROBIN WHITE

[born 1946 Ngāti Awa, New Zealand]

Fortress House, Paremata 1973

Oil on canvas

Dunedin Public Art Gallery, purchased 1981 with funds from the Dunedin Public Art Gallery Society

Robin White called this house a 'fortress' because it was 'neat, tidy, and utterly inscrutable'. She passed it many times and never saw anyone living there.

The building is distinctively Art Deco, with a symmetrical design, flat roof and linear decoration. White contrasts the rigid cubic forms of the house with the rolling hills in the background.

During the 1970s, White's art was compared with that of fellow artists Don Binney and Michael Smither. The critic Hamish Keith wrote in 1973 that, like them, 'White employs a tight, sharp realism to lift reality over the imaginative hill into something almost surreal.'

Hei tā Robin White, he rite tēnei whare ki te 'pā' nā te 'tau me te tino papai rawa o te āhua'. E hia kē nei ngā wā i pahure i a ia te whare rā, kāore rawa i kitea tētahi tangata e noho ana ki reira.

Nō te tikanga toi a te 'toi whakarākei' te hanga o tēnei whare, arā, he hangarite te tū, he papatahi te tuanui ā, kua whakanikonikohia ki ngā rārangi. Kei te whakatauaro a White i te mārō o ngā āhua matahuhua ki te rere o ngā puke e tū atu ana ki muri.

I ngā tau 1970, e tūhonotia ana te mahi toi a White ki tērā o ōna hoatoi, o Don Binney rāua ko Michael Smither. Pērā i a rāua, hei tā te tuhinga a Hamish Keith i te tau 1973, 'Kei te āta whakamahi a White i te tōtika o ngā hanga tūturu ki te hiki ake i ngā whakaaro ki tua noa atu o te puke, ki tētahi ao toi pohewa.'

ROBIN WHITE

[born 1946 Ngāti Awa, New Zealand]

Olympia, Maketu 1973

Screenprint on paper

Collection of Waikato Museum Te Whare Taonga o Waikato

Olympia – it has all of the elements I was trying to understand – the composition of line, tone, and colour, all fitting together.

– Robin White, 2022

The humble theatre in Maketū, Bay of Plenty, takes pride of place in this work. Pared back to simple geometric shapes, crisply outlined in black, it appears almost diagram-like – a grid of carefully balanced forms and colours.

White taught herself to make screenprints. Initially, she says, ‘I was just making mistakes and figuring out how to put the mistakes right.’ By 1973, she had refined her technique, and she felt *Olympia, Maketu, 1973*, was one of her best prints.

Ko *Olympia* – kei reira ngā āhuratanga katoa e whāia ana e au – ko ngā momo rārangi, ko te tāhina, ko ngā tae, e ō katoa ana ki te pikitia kotahi.

– Robin White, 2022

E tū whakaiti ana te whare pikitia o Maketū i Te Moana-a-Toi ki te manawa o tēnei pikitia. He huahua āhuahanga māmā e tāia ana ki te pene pango. Ānō he hoahoa te hanga – he kauwhata e whakataurite ana i ngā āhua me ngā tae.

I whakaako a White i a ia anō ki te mahi mātātuhi raumata. I te tīmatanga, hei tāna, ‘He mahi hapa noa aku mahi, nāwai ā, ka ako ahau ki te whakatika i aku hapa.’ Nō te tau 1973 rā anō, ka pai haere āna mahi, ā, ki a ia, ko *Olympia, Maketu* tētahi o āna mātātuhi tino pai rawa atu.

ROBIN WHITE

[born 1946 Ngāti Awa, New Zealand]

Paekakariki Hotel I, Aspells 1970

Screenprint on paper

Collection of Waikato Museum Te Whare Taonga o Waikato

Robin White distils line, form and colour to present 'Aspells', a Paekākāriki pub on the Kāpiti Coast. Radically cropped, this image could be a detail from a larger picture.

White made this work when she was in her early 20s, but it has all the hallmarks of her mature style of the 1970s – clarity, wit and an almost eerie sense of calm.

Kua āta whakawhāitihia e Robin White te rārangi, te āhua me te tae ki te waihanga i te whakaahua o 'Aspells', arā, he pāparakāuta ki Paekākāriki i Kāpiti. Nā te poronga o te whakaahua, tērā ka pōhēhētia he wāhi moroiti tēnei nō tētahi whakaahua nui.

Kei ōna 20 tau a White i te wā i waihangatia e ia tēnei whakaahua, heoi, kei te kitea kētia ngā kākano o tana taera toi i puāwai mai i ngā tau 1970 – he mārama, he ngahau, ā, he wairua mārire hoki tō āna mahi.

ROBIN WHITE

[born 1946 Ngāti Awa, New Zealand]

Sam Hunt at the Portobello Pub 1978

Oil on canvas on hardboard

Dunedin Public Art Gallery, purchased 1982 with funds from the Dunedin Public Art Gallery Society

Poet Sam Hunt squints into the westerly wind outside the Portobello pub in Muaūpoko Otago Peninsula. Time seems to stand still, but the angle of the sunlight suggests it's mid-morning.

Robin White worked from photographs of Hunt and drawings of the building to paint this portrait in her Portobello studio. She says, 'I wanted to get a grip on the subtleties of that entrance – the doors, glass panels and so on.' The building is almost entirely composed of straight lines except for the jaunty door handles, which echo Hunt's hands-on-hips stance.

White often used text in her early work – as a graphic element in the composition and a signifier of place. Here, the word 'BAR' alludes to Hunt's family history. His poem about his grandfather, 'Purple Balloon', contains the line 'drunk, rolling drunk, along the bar'.

E anga atu ana ngā karu o te ringatoi kupu, o Sam Hunt, ki te hau matatara ki waho atu i te pāparakāuta ki Te Parihaumia ki Muaūpoko i te kurae o Ōtākou. Te āhua nei kua tū te wā, heoi, e tohu ana ngā hīhī o te rā, kei waenga kē tēnei i te ata.

Ka whai a Robin White i ngā whakaahua o Hunt me ngā huahua o te whare ki te peita i tēnei whakaahua kiritangata i roto i tōna taupuni toi ki Te Parihaumia. Hei tāna, 'Ko taku hiahia, kia mau i a au ngā taipitopito o taua tomokanga – ko ngā tatau, ko ngā papa kōata, ko te aha atu, ko te aha atu anō.' He rārangi tōtika te nuinga o te whare, hāunga anō ngā kakau papai kei te tatau, e whai kē ana te hanga o ērā i te tū o Hunt, arā, e mau ana ōna ringa ki te hope.

Rite tonu te whakamahinga o te kupu ki roto i ngā mahi tuatahi a White – he momo whakanikoniko ā-kupu, he tohu anō o te wāhi. Kei konei, e whakaahua ana te kupu 'BAR' i ngā kōrero mō te whānau o Hunt. Kei roto i 'Purple Balloon', arā, i tana toikupu mō tōna koroua, i tuhia e ia ngā kupu 'drunk, rolling drunk, along the bar'.

ROBIN WHITE

[born 1946 Ngāti Awa, New Zealand]

Fish and Chips, Maketu 1975

Oil on canvas

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 1975

Pristine in powder blue, Robin White's fish and chip shop is a perfect harmony of geometric form, its components locking together with the precision of a jigsaw.

Writer Justin Paton spots an art historical reference: 'a building reflected in the fish-and-chip-shop window is also a [Colin] McCahon cross hovering in the blackness . . .'

Maketū in the Bay of Plenty was an important place for White. She visited it as a child, staying with family members who lived nearby, and her depictions of Maketū and its buildings are a form of honouring her relatives and their community.

This 'chippie' occupies the same site in Maketū today.

E pīataata mai ana te kikorangi o te pikitia o te toa hoko ika me te rīwai parai a Robin White. Me he panga tūhonohono te noho ngātahi o ngā tauria āhuahanga.

Kei te kite te kaituhi, a Justin Paton, i tētahi tohu nō tētahi o ngā mahi toi o mua: 'e whakaatahia mai ana tētahi whare ki te matapihi o te toa, kei reira hoki tētahi o ngā rīpeka a [Colin] McCahon e iri ana i te pōuri . . .'

He kāinga nui a Maketū i Te Moana-a-Toi ki a White. I a ia e tamariki ana, ka noho ia ki reira, ki ngā kāinga o ōna whanaunga; e whakanui ana āna whakaahua o te rohe me ngā whare o Maketū i ōna whanaunga me tō rātou hapori.

Kei reira tonu te toa hoko rīwai parai, kei Maketū i tēnei rā.

ROBIN WHITE

[born 1946 Ngāti Awa, New Zealand]

Jerry at the Paekak Pub 1971

Oil on canvas

Collection of the Dowse Art Museum

I remember seeing Jerry wearing a yellow shirt, a dark jerkin, and his long frizzy hair . . . and I thought (ah, what a handsome lad), I thought how helluva good that would look in a painting.

– Robin White, 1972

The same subject often inspired Robin White to make multiple images in different media – drawings, paintings and prints. In 1970, she made screenprints and drawings of the Paekākāriki pub, which led to this painting of her friend Jerry Ursell. You can see one of White's prints of the Paekākāriki pub in the previous gallery, on the far wall.

E mahara ana au i a Jerry e mau ana i tētahi hāte kōwhai me te wēkete pōuri, he roa ōna makawe kōtingotingo . . . ka whakaaro au (e, kātahi te tama pūrotu), ka rawe pea tēnei hei mahi peita.

– Robin White, 1972

Ka whakaawe a Robin White e tētahi kaupapa, ka hangaia e ia te maha o ngā whakaahua mō taua kaupapa – he tānga, he peita me ngā mātātuhi. I te tau 1970, ka mahi a Robin White i ēnei mātātuhi raumata o te pāparakāuta o Paekākāriki, whāia, ka mahia e ia tēnei mahi peita o tōna hoa, o Jerry Ursell. Kei te whare toi o mua, kei te pakitara kei tua rā anō o te kuhunga, tētahi o ngā mātātuhi a White o te pāparakāuta o Paekākāriki.

ROBIN WHITE

[born 1946 Ngāti Awa, New Zealand]

Clouds, Hill and Claudia 1972

Oil on canvas

Hocken Collections Uare Taoka o Hākena, University of Otago

Robin White depicts her art-school friend Claudia Pond Eyley framed by her villa in front of Maungawhau Mount Eden, Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. In reality, the villa was on the opposite side of the street, but White was attracted to this landscape with its distinctive linear rhythms.

White produced several drawings of Pond Eyley during trips to Auckland in the early 1970s, which she used to paint this portrait after returning home to Paremata, near Porirua.

Kei te whakaahua atu a Robin White i tōna hoa nō te kura toi, arā, i a Claudia Pond Eyley, e tāparehia ana tōna āhua e tōna whare kei raro iho i a Maungawhau ki Tāmaki Makaurau. I te ao tūturu, kei tērā taha o te rori kē taua whare, heoi, e whakapoapoaia ana a White e te takoto motuhake o ngā rārangi o tēnei whenua.

He nui ngā tānga pene hinu i tāia e White mō Pond Eyley i āna toronga atu ki Tāmaki Makaurau i te tīmatanga o ngā tau 1970. Nō muri atu i tōna hokinga ki te kāinga, arā, ki Paremata e pātata ana ki Porirua, ka whai ia i aua taurira ki te peita i tēnei whakaahua kiritangata.

ROBIN WHITE

[born 1946 Ngāti Awa, New Zealand]

Michael at Home 1978

Screenprint on paper

Collection of the Sarjeant Gallery, purchased 1995

I was made to be still and hold that pose for what seemed like hours ...
All I wanted to do was go and play outside!

– Michael Fudakowski Jr, 2022

Robin White made this portrait of her son Michael just before he started school – a turning point in his life, and in hers. Michael sits on a chair made by his grandfather, below one of White’s screenprints.

The work of Rita Angus (1908–1970) strongly influenced White. Both artists made several portraits set in domestic environments, and both used personal objects to tell stories about their subjects.

White says, ‘There was a lot to learn from Rita. I admired the way she used line and applied paint, the patterning of lights and darks . . . I came to understand that Rita Angus had integrity, and so did her paintings.’

I whakahaua au ki te tū toka, e hia haora au e tū pērā ana . . . Ko tōku tino hiahia, he puta atu ki waho tākaro ai!

– Michael Fudakowski (paku), 2022

He mea waihanga tēnei whakaahua kiritangata nā Robin White mō tāna tama, mō Michael, i mua tata tonu i tana tīmatanga ki te kura – he ara hou tēnā mōna, otirā mō White anō. E noho ana a Michael ki runga i tētahi tūru i hangaia e tōna koroua, kei raro iho i tētahi o ngā mātātuhi raumata a White.

Ko ngā mahi a Rita Angus (1908–1970) tētahi o ngā pou whakaaweawe o White. Ko te kāinga te wāhi i tū ai ētahi o ngā whakaahua kiritangata a ngā ringatoi e rua, ā, ka tīkina ake ngā taputapu whaiaro hei whakaahua i ngā kaupapa o ā rāua mahi toi.

Hei tā White, ‘Inā kē te nui o aku akoranga i a Rita. Ka mīharo au ki tāna whakamahinga o te rārangi me āna tānga peita, ki ngā tauira kōmā me ngā tauira uriuri . . . Nāwai rā, e mārāma ana ki a au he wahine pono a Rita Angus, waihoki āna mahi peita.’

ROBIN WHITE

[born 1946 Ngāti Awa, New Zealand]

Mere and Siulolovao, Otago Peninsula 1978

Screenprint on paper

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 2004

The woman in this portrait, with her baby Siulolovao, is Robin White's friend and neighbour, Mere Montgomery. Mere was a founding member of the Dunedin chapter of the Polynesian Panthers, and a leading advocate for Dunedin's Māori and Pacific communities.

Decades later, Mere's daughter Siulolovao Moya Montgomery gave birth to her own child at Dunedin Hospital. Siulolovao says, 'The nurses and midwives referred to me as "the baby", as [this] print was hanging in one of the many maternity ward corridors.'

Mere and Siulolovao, Otago Peninsula, 1978, is one of Robin White's most complex screenprints, with more than 30 colours. It was commissioned as a fundraiser for the fourth United Women's Convention, held in Hamilton in 1979.

Ko Mere Montgomery te wahine i roto i tēnei whakaahua kiritangata, ko rāua ko tāna pēpi, ko Siulolovao. He hoa, he tangata nohotata ki a Robin White. Ko Mere tētahi o ngā mema taketake o te rōpū Polynesian Panthers ki Ōtepoti, ā, he kaikōkiri ia e kaha ana ki te hāpai i te noho o ngā tāngata Māori me ērā o Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa ki Ōtepoti.

E hia ngahuru tau whai muri mai, ka whānau mai te tamaiti a te tamāhine a Mere, arā, a Siulolovao Moya Montgomery ki te hōhipera o Ōtepoti. Hei tā Siulolovao, 'Ko "te pēpi" taku ingoa kārangaranga ki ngā nēhi me ngā tapuhi, i te mea e iri ana te [tēnei] mātātuhi i tētahi o ngā hōro o te whare whakawhānau pēpi.'

Koiane tētahi o ngā mātātuhi raumata matatini a Robin White, neke atu i te 30 ngā tae. I tonoa tēnei mahi hei mahi moni mō te tuawhā o ngā huihuinga o te United Women's Convention, i tū ki Kirikiriroa i te tau 1979.

ROBIN WHITE

[born 1946 Ngāti Awa, New Zealand]

A Buzzy Bee for Siulolovao 1977

Screenprint on paper

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 1977

Mere Montgomery's house is nestled among trees and dwarfed by her daughter's Buzzy Bee in the sky above.

Affordable and depicting iconic, everyday Kiwi objects, prints like this found a wide audience during the 1970s. Robin White was one of just a small number of artists who were able to earn a living from their work in Aotearoa during the decade.

Kei konei, kei raro te whare o Mere Montgomery i te āhurutanga o ngā rākau, ā, kei te rere te Buzzy Bee nunui a tāna tamāhine i te rangi.

Nā runga i te māmā o te utu o ēnei pikitia me ngā rawa rongonui o ia rā nō Aotearoa, ka pīrangitia nuitia ngā mātātuhi pēnei i tēnei i ngā tau 1970. Ko Robin White tētahi o te kāhui ringatoi ruarua nei i whai pūtea i ā rātou mahi toi i taua ngahuru tau ki Aotearoa.

ROBIN WHITE

[born 1946 Ngāti Awa, New Zealand]

Michael, Allan's Beach 1975

Pencil on paper

Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, purchased 2009

Michael, Allan's Beach 1975

Screenprint on paper

Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, purchased 2004

In these portraits of her son Michael, Robin White includes a dead seagull that was found on the road outside her cottage.

At the time, White was exhausted from juggling the demands of art and motherhood. She identified with the seagull: 'In a way that was me.'

Kei ēnei whakaahua kiritangata o tāna tama, o Michael, kua tā a Robin White i te tūpāpaku o tētahi karoro i kitea e ia ki runga i te rori kei waho atu i tōna whare iti.

I taua wā, e whakapau kaha ana a White ki ngā mahi nui a te ao toi me te māmā. Ki a ia, he ōrite ia ki te karoro: 'Ko te whakaaro, ko ahau anō tērā.'

ROBIN WHITE

[born 1946 Ngāti Awa, New Zealand]

Sam Hunt and Hills across the Harbour 1976

Oil on canvas

Collection of Waikato Museum Te Whare Taonga o Waikato, purchased with assistance from Hamilton Motorcycle Club

Poet Sam Hunt poses casually in the centre of the painting, appearing like a paper cut-out placed against the harbour and hills of Muaūpoko Otago Peninsula. Behind him, the harbour is flattened, with the water's edge reduced to a simple blue line.

During Robin White's time living on Muaūpoko, she painted many portraits of people in front of buildings and landscapes. She mostly depicted family and friends like Hunt: 'I couldn't imagine painting anyone I didn't like.'

E tū noa ana tēnei ringa toikupu, arā, a Sam Hunt. Kei waenganui pū ia i te mahi peita, ānō nei kua tapahia tōna āhua i te pepa, ā, kua tāpirihia ki mua i te whanga me ngā puke o Muaūpoko. Kei muri i a ia, kua papa pounamu te wai, ā, kua whakawhāitihia te ākau ki tētahi rārangi kahurangi māmā.

I a Robin White e noho ana ki Muaūpoko, he tini ngā tāngata i peitahia e ia e tū ana ki mua i ngā whare me te whenua. Ko te nuinga, ko tōna whānau rātou ko ōna hoa, pērā i a Hunt: 'E kore rawa au e peita i tētahi tangata kāore i pai ki a au.'

ROBIN WHITE

[born 1946 Ngāti Awa, New Zealand]

Florence and Harbour Cone 1974

Oil on canvas

Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, purchased 1975 with assistance from the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council

In 1973, Robin White gave birth to her first child, Michael, and her mother Florence visited to help with childcare and housework. Shortly after, White began to make drawings of Florence: 'I went back into the studio with baby and Mum came too.'

Florence sits in front of Hereweka Harbour Cone, wearing her starched white apron. She becomes part of the landscape, the curves of her body echoed in the rhythms of the hills. In its monumentality and sense of gravitas, this image recalls the Italian Renaissance portraits that White admired.

Looking back, White says, 'That painting was about becoming a mother myself.'

I te tau 1973, ka whānau mai te tamaiti tuatahi a White, arā, a Michael, kātahi ka haere atu tana māmā, a Florence ki a ia ki te tiaki mokopuna, ki te āwhina hoki ki te whakapaipai whare. Nō muri tata atu, ka tīmata a White ki te waihanga pikitia o Florence: 'I hoki atu māua ko pēpi ki te taupuni toi, ka whai mai hoki a Māmā.'

Kei te noho a Florence ki mua o Hereweka e mau ana i tōna pini tāhi mā. Kua whakakotahihia tōna tinana me te whenua, ā, e whai ana te hanga o tōna tinana i te āhua o ngā puke. He hokinga mahara tēnei whakaahua ki te ihi me te wehi o ngā whakaahua kiritangata o te wā o te Renaissance ki Itari e ngākaunuitia ana e White.

Ka hoki ngā mahara o White, ko tāna, 'Ko te kaupapa o tērā mahi peita ko tōku anō whanaketanga hei māmā.'

ROBIN WHITE

[born 1946 Ngāti Awa, New Zealand]

Hooper's Inlet 1976

Oil on canvas on board

The Fletcher Trust Collection

Hoopers Inlet lies at the base of Hereweka Harbour Cone on Muaūpoko Otago Peninsula.

During the 1970s, Robin White painted several hard-edged landscapes like this, using crisp outlines, strong light and flat blocks of colour to describe the environment around her.

She took 'liberties' with the environment to explore form and to create compelling images: 'I've always been conscious that painting is fundamentally an abstract thing.'

Kei Muaūpoko, kei te pūtake o Hereweka a Hoopers Inlet, kei Muaūpoko ki te kūrae o Ōtākou.

I ngā tau 1970, ngangahu kau ana te āhua o te whenua i ngā mahinga toi i peitahia e Robin White pēnei i tēnei, arā, ka whakaahuangia e ia te whenua e karapoti ana i a ia ki te rārangi tōtika, ki te mārama kaha me ngā poro tae papatahi hei whakaahua te taiao e karapoti ana i a ia.

Ka tuku ia i tōna 'wairua auaha' kia rere kia tūhurangia e ia te hanga o ngā mea, kia waihanga hoki ia i ngā whakaahua whakahirahira: 'Kua mōhio noa atu au, he mahi tūrehurehu kē te mahi peita.'

ROBIN WHITE

[born 1946 Ngāti Awa, New Zealand]

Concrete Angel, Rata 1973

Oil on canvas

Dunedin Public Art Gallery, purchased 1973 with funds from the Dunedin Public Art Gallery Society

This painting and the two drawings on your right show Robin White's willingness to reimagine a subject – or transpose it to a new location.

In 1971, on a road trip with Sam Hunt, White saw a statue of an angel in the urupā (cemetery) of St Joseph's Catholic Church in Rātā, Rangitīkei.

In *Concrete Angel, Rata*, 1973, she depicts the church and the angel, framing them with the kōwhaiwhai patterns that adorn the church interior.

E whakaatu ana tēnei mahi peita – me ngā mea e rua kei tērā taha, kei tō taha matau – i te hiahia o Robin White ki te whakaahua anō i tētahi kaupapa, ki te whakawhiti rānei i taua kaupapa ki tētahi wāhi hou.

I te tau 1971, i tētahi haerenga i te taha o Sam Hunt, ka kite a Robin White i tētahi pakoko o tētahi anahera i roto i tētahi urupā ki te Whare Karakia o Hato Hōhepa ki Rātā, i Rangitīkei.

Kei *Concrete Angel, Rata* nō te tau 1973, kei te whakaahua ia i te whare karakia me te anahera. Kua tāparehia ngā mea e rua ki ngā tauira kōwhaiwhai nō roto tonu i te whare karakia.

ROBIN WHITE

[born 1946 Ngāti Awa, New Zealand]

Concrete Angel 1974

Pencil on paper

On loan from private collection, Dunedin

This angel was inspired by a statue in an urupā (cemetery) in Pāuatahanui, near Porirua. Robin White locates it in front of Hereweka Harbour Cone, a landscape that she returned to in many of her works from the 1970s. In the drawing to your right, *Concrete Angel*, 1973, she relocates a different angel into this same environment.

White's *Concrete Angel* drawings feature in *Something Nothing* (1974), a book of poems written by Hone Tuwhare, one of White's close friends and one of the organisers of the annual hui of Ngā Puna Waihanga, the association of Māori writers and artists.

Kua hua mai te whakaaro mō tēnei anahera i tētahi pakoko e tū ana ki tētahi urupā ki Pāuatahanui, ki Porirua. Kua whakatū a White i te anahera ki mua o Hereweka. He whenua tērā i tāia nuitia e ia i ngā tau 1970. Kei tō taha matau, kei te pikitia o *Concrete Angel* nō te tau 1973, kua tāia tētahi atu anahera ki tēnei wāhi.

Kei te pukapuka a *Something Nothing* (1974) ēnei pikitia. He pukapuka toikupu tērā nā Hone Tuwhare, he tino hoa nō White, ā, koia anō tētahi o ngā kaiwhakahaere o te hui ā-tau o Ngā Puna Waihanga, arā, ko te huihuinga o ngā kaituhi me ngā ringatoi Māori.

ROBIN WHITE

[born 1946 Ngāti Awa, New Zealand]

Concrete Angel 1973

Pencil on paper

Collection of Waikato Museum Te Whare Taonga o Waikato

In this work Robin White relocates the angel from the urupā (cemetery) at Rātā Rangitīkei, depicted in *Concrete Angel, Rata*, 1974, into the distinctive Hereweka Harbour Cone landscape.

Curator Taarati Taiaroa observes that there is a connection between:

the upward thrust of Hereweka, the church steeple in Rata and the angel's hand. This equivalence, and reverence for the land, can also be traced in comments White made in 1977, when she described Hereweka as being 'like an icon in the landscape' that 'seems to take on a sort of spiritual significance'.

Kei konei, kua kawē a Robin White i te anahera e whakaatuhia ana ki te mahi peita o *Concrete Angel, Rata* nō te tau 1974, atu i te urupā o Rātā i Rangitīkei ki te whenua o Hereweka.

Hei tā te kairaupī, a Taarati Taiaroa, kei te kitea tētahi hononga i waenga i:

te tū o Hereweka, te tū o te pourewa o te whare karakia o Rata me te ringaringa o te anahera. Kei te rangona hoki te whakaaro nui ki te whenua i roto i ngā kōrero a White nō te tau 1977. Hei tāna he rite a Hereweka ki 'tētahi tūtohu whenua' e mau ana 'i tōna anō wairua motuhake'.

ROBIN WHITE

[born 1946 Ngāti Awa, New Zealand]

Harbour Cone I 1973

Watercolour

On loan from the Ballin collection

The distinctive form of Hereweka Harbour Cone can be seen from many locations in Muaūpoko and across Otago Harbour. It is considered so significant that in 2008 Dunedin City Council purchased its 328 hectares to protect its ecological, cultural and heritage values. The landscape's inspiration for the work of Robin White and other artists was, the local body authority noted, part of the impetus for its preservation.

Mahea te kite atu o te hanganga motuhake o Hereweka mai i ngā wāhi maha o Muaūpoko, ā, whakawhiti atu hoki i te whanga o Ōtākou. Nā runga i tōna mana whakahirahira, ka hokona te whenua – e 328 heketea te nui – e te Kaunihera o Ōtepoti i te tau 2008 hei whakamarumaruru i ngā āhuatanga motuhake o te ao hauropi, hei taonga tuku iho anō mā te tangata. Hei tā ngā mana whakahaere rā, i puta mai tō rātou hiahia ki te tiaki i te puke nei nā ngā mahinga toi a Robin White me ētahi atu mō tēnei tūtohu whakahirahira.

ROBIN WHITE

[born 1946 Ngāti Awa, New Zealand]

Harbour Cone 1972

Oil on canvas

Dunedin Public Art Gallery, purchased with funds from the Dunedin Public Art Gallery Society, the Dunedin City Council, the Sargood Bequest, the Otago Community Trust, the Alexander McMillan Trust, the Emily and Charles Merrie Bequest and Kay and Alan Gray

Harbour Cone's original name is Hereweka, meaning 'to snare weka'.

The name references Tarewai, a tupuna (ancestor) of Kāi Tahu. After being violently attacked by enemies he escaped and took refuge in a cave on Hereweka. Tarewai snared weka there and healed his wounds with their hinu (oil).

Ko te ingoa taketake o Harbour Cone ko Hereweka, arā, ko te 'tāhere i te weka'.

He tupuna a Tarewai nō te iwi o Kāi Tahu. Ka whakaekea ia e ōna hoariri, engari ka puta atu ia ki tētahi ana ki runga tonu o Hereweka. Ka herea e Tarewai ngā weka, ka pania te hinu ki runga i ōna mamae.

ROBIN WHITE

[born 1946 Ngāti Awa, New Zealand]

Self-Portrait with Harbour Cone 1973

Graphite on paper

On loan from the Ballin collection

Robin White depicts herself sheltered under the peak of Hereweka Harbour Cone and the neighbouring hills. At the time, she was in the final weeks of pregnancy with her first child.

Her Bahá'í brooch is similar to the one her mother Florence wears in *Florence and Harbour Cone*, 1974, displayed on the opposite wall.

Drawing is at the heart of White's practice – a means of developing and refining ideas, but also a vital medium in its own right.

Kei te whakaahua a Robin White i a ia anō, kei raro i te tāwharau o te tihi o Hereweka me ngā puke e tūtū mai ana ki tōna taha. Nō ngā wiki whakamutunga o te hapūtanga tuatahi o White tēnei pikitia.

He rite te āhua o tana pine Bahá'í ki tērā e mau ana i tōna māmā, i a Florence, ki roto i te pikitia o *Florence and Harbour Cone*, nō te tau 1974, kei te pakitara, kei tērā taha.

Ko te tā pikitia tētahi o ngā tino mahi a White – he ara toi hei whakawhanake, hei whakahāngai i ōna whakaaro, otirā, he tikanga toi whakahirahira tonu.

ROBIN WHITE

[born 1946 Ngāti Awa, New Zealand]

BALE JIONE

[1952–2016 Fiji]

LEBA TOKI

[born 1951 Fiji]

Masi (Fijian barkcloth) from Suka Siti (Sugar City) 2008

Barkcloth, natural dye, vegetable adhesive

Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, purchased 2010

In 2008, Robin White collaborated with two expert Fijian *masi* (barkcloth) artists, Bale Jione and Leba Toki, to make an ambitious new work.

Suka Siti (Sugar City), 2008, is inspired by the Lautoka Sugar Mill, a landmark in Leba Toki's hometown, Lautoka. It acknowledges the history of indentured labour in Fiji in the 19th century – the *masi* is the same size as the rooms once issued to workers.

A fusion of customary *masi* patterns with new motifs, *Suka Siti (Sugar City)* includes images of the Lautoka Sugar Mill and symbols from major world religions. At its centre – representing the shared faith of the three artists – is the Bahá'í World Centre in Haifa, Israel.

I te tau 2008, i mahi ngātahi a Robin White ki ētahi tohunga toi *masi* nō Whītī, arā, ki a Bale Jione rāua ko Leba Toki, ki te waihanga i tēnei toi hou whakahirahira.

He mea whakaawe a *Suka Siti (Sugar City)* nā te Lautoka Sugar Mill, he tūtohu whenua ki te kāinga o Leba Toki, ki Lautoka. He hokinga mahara tēnei mahi toi ki te pārautanga o ngā kaimahi ki Whītī i te rautau 19 – he ōrite te rahi o te masi ki ngā rūma o ngā kaimahi i taua wā.

Kua whakakotahihia ngā taura tuku iho a te *masi* me ngā tohu hou, ā, kei te mau a *Suka Siti (Sugar City)* i ngā pikitia o te Lautoka Sugar Mill me ngā tohu mai i ngā whakapono nui o te ao. Kei waenganui pū te Bahá'í World Centre ki Haifa i Iharaira, e tohu ana i te whakapono o ngā ringatoi e toru.

LEBA TOKI and BALE JIONE

Leba Toki and Bale Jione were born on Nasau, on the island of Moce in Fiji's Lau Group. They grew up with the art of *masi* (barkcloth), learning from their elders.

Toki joined the Bahá'í Faith in 1968 and moved to Viti Levu in 1975 after her marriage. She met Robin White while serving as an auxiliary board member for the Bahá'í Faith in the 1990s. Toki first collaborated with White on a large, three-part *masi* titled *Cakacakavata* in 2000.

Bale Jione joined the Bahá'í Faith in Viti Levu after moving there with her husband. Her sister-in-law Leba Toki introduced her to Robin White, and the three women created *Suka Siti (Sugar City)* and *Teitei Vou (A New Garden)* in 2008–09.

Masi has, Toki says, 'assisted us in many ways, especially in supporting our families and the community, and helping me to travel to other countries'.

I whānau mai a Leba Toki rāua ko Bale Jione ki Nasau, i runga i te motu o Moce ki te Kāhui Moutere o Lau ki Whītī. He tikanga toi te masi nō tō rātou tamarikitanga, i ako rātou i te taha o ō rātou kaumātua.

Ka piri atu a Toki ki te Hāhi Bahá'í i te tau 1968, ā, ka hūnuku ki Viti Levu i te tau 1975 nō muri atu i tōna mārena. Ka tūtaki ia ki a Robin White i a ia e mahi ana hei mema tāpiri o te poari o te Hāhi Bahá'í i ngā tau 1990. Ko te mahinga ngātahi tuatahi a rāua ko White, ko tētahi masi nunui i te tau 2000. E toru ngā wāhanga o taua *masi*, ko *Cakacakavata* te ingoa.

Ka piri atu a Bale Jione ki te Hāhi Bahá'í i Viti Levu nō muri tata atu i tōna hūnukutanga ki reira i te taha o tōna hoa tāne. Ka tūtaki ia ki a Robin White i te taha o tōna taokete, o Leba Toki, ā, ka waihanga ngā wāhine tokotoru rā i a *Suka Siti (Sugar City)* me *Teitei Vou (A New Garden)* i te tau 2008–09.

He nui 'ngā painga kua taka mai i te mahi *masi*,' te kī a Toki, 'kua whai tautoko ō mātou whānau me te hāpori, ā, kua toro atu au ki ētahi atu whenua hoki'.

TE ITOINGAINA CATHOLIC WOMEN'S TRAINING CENTRE

Te Itoiningaina Catholic Women's Training Centre is a community development organisation on Tarawa atoll. White worked with expert weaver Nei Katimira and other women from the centre for two years to create the *New Angel* series, completed in 1998.

Te Itoiningaina used the money from the sale of *New Angel* to expand its accommodation for women.

The weavers included Nei Aroita, Nei Katimira, Nei Tetira, Nei Bwebwetaake, Nei Temateruru, Nei Temainang, Nei Ringa, Nei Tauno, Nei Teekoiti, Nei Makurita, Nei Mangarita, Nei Taruru, Nei Kaekoua, Nei Taburimai, Nei Karawa, Nei Ameria, Nei Teaanako, and Nei Tabanou.

He whare whakawhanake hapori Te Itoiningaina Catholic Women's Training Centre ki runga i te motu iti o Tarawa. E rua tau a White e mahi tahi ana i te taha o te tohunga raranga, o Nei Katimira me ētahi atu wāhine mai i te whare rā, ki te waihanga i te raupapa toi o *New Angel*.

Nā te pūtea o te hokotanga atu o *New Angel*, ka whakawhānui ake Te Itoiningaina i ngā whare noho mō ngā wāhine.

Ko ēnei ētahi o ngā kairaranga, ko Nei Aroita rātou ko Nei Katimira, ko Nei Tetira, ko Nei Bwebwetaake, ko Nei Temateruru, ko Nei Temainang, ko Nei Ringa, ko Nei Tauno, ko Nei Teekoiti, ko Nei Makurita, ko Nei Mangarita, ko Nei Taruru, ko Nei Kaekoua, ko Nei Taburimai, ko Nei Karawa, ko Nei Ameria, ko Nei Teaanako, ko Nei Tabanou.

FLORENCE MASIPEI

Robin's family learned from our family and we learned from them. We helped each other.

– Florence Masipei, 2018

Florence Masipei and Robin White became friends soon after White and her family arrived on Tarawa atoll, Kiribati, in 1982. Fifteen-year-old Florence taught White *te taetae ni Kiribati* (Kiribati language) and White helped Florence improve her English.

In 1998, the two collaborated on the embroidered artwork *Food for Thought*.

Some of White's portraits of Florence can be seen in this gallery in *Beginner's Guide to Gilbertese*, 1983, *Twenty-eight Days in Kiribati*, 1985 and in the *Nutiiran/Kiribati* workbook, 1983.

I ako te whānau o Robin mai i tōku whānau, ā, i ako mātou mai i a rātou. I āwhina tētahi i tētahi.

– Florence Masipei, 2018

I whakahoahoa a Florence Masipei rāua ko Robin White nō muri tata atu i te hūnukutanga o te whānau o White ki te motu iti o Tarawa i Kiripati i te tau 1982. Tekau mā rima tau te pakeke o Florence, ka ākona a White e ia ki *te taetae ni Kiribati* (te reo o Kiripati), ā, ka opeopehia e White te reo Ingarihi o Florence.

I te tau 1998, ka mahi tahi tēnei tokorua ki te tuitui i te mahi toi o *Food for Thought*.

Kei tēnei whare toi ētahi o ngā whakaahua kiritangata o Florence nā White, arā, kei te *Beginner's Guide to Gilbertese*, nō te tau 1983, kei *Twenty-eight Days in Kiribati*, nō te tau 1985, ā, kei roto hoki i te pukamahi a *Nutiiran/Kiribati*, nō te tau 1983.

This screen shows images of all the artworks in
Twenty-eight Days in Kiribati, 1987.
Touch to pause the slideshow.

Ka whakaatu atu tēnei mata i ngā mahi toi katoa ki
roto i te *Twenty-eight Days in Kiribati, 1987*.
Pā i te mata kia tū te whakaaturanga

AURI OLSSON

Auri Olsson grew up in Whakaoriori Masterton and was a childhood friend of Robin White's daughter, Florence. A local graffiti artist, he worked on a number of wool bale canvases that White later completed. He now lives in Perth, Australia.

I tipu ake a Auri Olsson ki Whakaoriori, ā, he hoa ia nō Florence, nō te tamāhine a Robin White i te wā o tōna itinga. He ringatoi karawhiti ia nō taua rohe tonu, he maha āna mahi toi ki runga i ngā pēre wūru, ā, nā White i whakatutuki. Kei Perth i Ahitereiria a Olsson e noho ana i tēnei wā.

ROBIN WHITE

[born 1946 Ngāti Awa, New Zealand]

September 21, 2018 (Self-Portrait) 2018

Watercolour on paper

On loan from private collection

This pensive self-portrait shows a mature Robin White inside her Whakaoriori Masterton home of almost 20 years. It is late winter: the trees have lost their leaves, and the artist wears a woollen fisherman knit sweater. The villa across the street can be seen out the window and the intersecting powerlines of suburban New Zealand crisscross a bleak, overcast sky. White has deliberately placed a woven pandanus mat behind her, evoking her time in the Pacific, an important part of her sense of identity.

White created this self-portrait for a 2018 exhibition celebrating 50 years of the Peter McLeavey Gallery. She deliberately references her 1979 self-portrait, *This is me at Kaitangata*, which appears as a screenprint at the start of this exhibition. Her once greying hair is now completely white.

Kei te rangona te wairua whakaaroaro i roto i tēnei whakaahua kiriaro a Robin White. Kua pakeke ia, ā, kua tata ki te 20 tau te roa o tāna noho ki roto i tōna kāinga ki Whakaoriori. Ko te paunga tēnei o te Takurua: kua ngahoro ngā rau i ngā rākau, ā, kei te mau te ringatoi i tētahi o ngā poraka nitiniti o ngā kaihi ika. Kei tērā taha o te rori, kei waho atu o te matapihi, tētahi kāinga noho, ā, kei te whakawhitiwhiti ngā rārangi hiko o ngā kāinga o ngāi tāone o Aotearoa ki runga i te pōuri o te rangi kāpuapua. Kua āta whakatakotoria e White tētahi whāriki rauhara ki muri i a ia anō, he hokinga mahara ki te wā i a ia e noho ana ki Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa, he wāhi nui tērā o tōna tuakiri.

He mea waihanga tēnei whakaahua kiriaro e White i te tau 2008 mō tētahi whakaaturanga e whakanui ana i te huringa o te 50 tau mai i te tuwheratanga o te Peter McLeavey Gallery. Kua takea mai tēnei mahi toi i tāna whakaahua kiriaro nō te tau 1979, arā, i *This is me at Kaitangata*. Kei te tīmatanga o tēnei whakaaturanga tētahi mātātuhi raumata o taua pikitia. He hina te tae o ōna makawe i taua wā, ināianei, kua pūmā te katoa.

KEIKO IIMURA

Born in Tokyo, Keiko Iimura never met her father, who was killed in World War II in the Pacific when she was two years old. She migrated to New Zealand in 1997 and met Robin White through a mutual friend who was part of the Bahá'í community in Whakaoriori Masterton.

Iimura, a Buddhist, selected the text for *Summer Grass*, 2001 and inscribed it on the painting in Japanese characters.

When White first contacted Iimura about collaborating, she was reluctant, because she lacked confidence in her calligraphy. But once she saw the painting in White's studio with her mother, who was visiting from Tokyo, she was overcome with emotion. On that day, she recalls, 'I had no chance to say "No" to Robin in writing calligraphy on her painting.'

I whānau mai a Keiko Iimura ki Tokyo, ā, kāore ia i tūtaki ki tōna pāpā i te mea i hinga ia ki Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa i Te Pakanga Tuarua o te Ao. E rua tau noa te pakeke o Keiko. Ka hūnuku ia ki Aotearoa i te tau 1997, ka tūtaki rāua ko Robin White nā tō rāua hoa kotahi nō te whakapono o te Bahá'í ki Whakaoriori.

Nō te Hāhi Puta a Iimura, ā, nāna anō ngā kupu i tīpako ake hei tā ki runga i te pikitia o *Summer Grass* i te tau 2001, ka tāia ki te reo ā-tuhi o Nipono ki runga i te mahi peita.

I te wā i whakapā atu a White ki a Iimura e pā ana ki tētahi mahinga ngātahi, ka hopo a Iimura, kāore ia i whakapono ki te pai o āna anō mahi tuhituhi. Heoi, nō tana kitenga atu i te pikitia ki roto i te taupuni toi o White (i reira anō tōna māmā i tētahi toronga nō Nipono) ka puare mai tōna whatumanawa. I taua rā, hei tāna, 'Kāore e taea e au te whakahua i te kupu "Kāore" ki a Robin e pā ana ki te whakanikonikotanga o tāna pikitia ki te reo ā-tuhi o Nipono.'

TAEKO OGAWA

Taeko Ogawa was born in Kyoto, Japan, in 1951 and studied calligraphy from childhood. In 1973 she graduated from art school at Kyoto University, but rejected the constraints of traditional calligraphy in favour of a more experimental approach. Since then, she has focused on exploring the expressive potential of calligraphy within a contemporary art context.

Based in Tsuda, a village in the Hiroshima prefecture, Ogawa exhibits widely, exploring themes of peace, and often collaborates with artists from other nations. She worked with Robin White in 2019 to complete *August 6*.

I whānau mai a Taeko Ogawa ki Kyoto i Nipono i te tau 1951, ka ako ia i te reo ā-tuhi a Nipono i tōna tamarikitanga. I te tau 1973, ka puta atu ia i te kura toi ki Tokyo University, engari ka whakahēngia e ia ngā here o ngā te reo ā-tuhi o te ao tawhito, ā, ka tahuri kē ki te whakamātautau i ngā ara hou. Mai anō i taua wā, kua tūhura ia i ngā momo whakaputanga rerekē o te reo ā-tuhi o Nipono ki roto i ngā mahinga toi a te ao hou.

E noho ana a Ogawa ki te papakāings o Tsuda, ki te takiwā o Hiroshima, ā, he nui āna whakaaturanga e whai ana i te kaupapa o te maungārongo. He nui āna mahinga ngātahi ki ngā tāngata nō whenua kē. I te tau 2019, ka mahi tahi rāua ko Robin White ki te whakaoti i te mahinga toi o *August 6*.

ROBIN WHITE

[born 1946 Ngāti Awa, New Zealand]

TAMARI CABEIKANACEA

[born 1967 Fiji]

That Vase 2019

Barkcloth, earth pigments, natural dye

Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, gift of Chris and Kathy Parkin, 2021

Robin White and Tamari Cabeikanacea made *That Vase*, 2019 in Leba Toki's living room in Lautoka, Fiji. Toki is one of Robin White's frequent collaborators, and Tamari Cabeikanacea's aunt.

That Vase represents the living, communal environment in which it was made. The pattern from Toki's linoleum floor is repeated in its *draudrau* (stencil pattern), a tribute to the artists' collaborative working surface and the daily rhythms enfolding the work's creation.

From this small domestic space, the artists connect with the wider world.

You can see a film about the making of *That Vase* in this gallery.

I hangaia te mahinga toi o *That Vase* e Robin White rāua ko Tamari Cabeikanacea ki roto i te rūma noho o Leba Toki ki Lautoko i Whītī. He nui ngā wā kua mahi tahi a Robin White rāua ko Toki, ā, koia anō te whaea kēkē o Tamari Cabeikanacea.

He tohu a *That Vase* mō te wairua ora me te whanaungatanga i roto i te wāhi i hangaia ai tēnei mahinga toi. E tōwaitia ana ngā tauira o te papa kahupeka o Toki ki te *draudrau* (he kōwhaiwhai tāhua) kei runga i te mahinga toi – he tohu whakamānawa ki te papa i hua ake ai ā rātou mahi.

Atu i tēnei ātea iti, ka tūhonohono atu ngā ringatoi ki te ao whānui.

Mātakina tētahi kiriata ki roto i tēnei whare toi mō te hanganga o *That Vase*.

ROBIN WHITE

[born 1946 Ngāti Awa, New Zealand]

TAMARI CABEIKANACEA

[born 1967 Fiji]

Something is happening here 2017

from: **Something is happening here 2017**

Barkcloth, earth pigments, natural dye

Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, purchased 2018

Within the layers of fragrant pigment and fibre are held, hidden and recorded, long hours of silent contemplation, laughter, storytelling, tears, prayerful problem-solving, deep consultation, a rhythm of challenges and the strengthening of family ties.

– Ruha Fifita, 2016

In 2017 Robin White, Tamari Cabeikanacea, and Ruha Fifita made a series of barkcloth works depicting imaginary uninhabited interiors. These works have an eerie quality – the sense that someone has just left the room.

The artists are guided by their Bahá'í faith, which encourages collaboration between people and communities.

E mau ana ana, e huna ana, e hopukina ana ki te hā o ngā kano me ngā weu kakara ngā haora o te nohopuku, o te katakata, o te pakiwaitara, o te roimata, o te īnoi whai hua, o te whakawhiti whakaaro. He takinga wero nui hei whakapūmau i ngā herenga o te whānau.

– Ruha Fifita, 2016

I te tau 2017, ka waihanga a Robin White rātou ko Tamari Cabeikanacea, ko Ruha Fifita i tētahi raupapa toi tapa e pohewa ana i ngā wāhi o te tuawhenua e tū mōwai ana. He āhuatanga wehi kei ēnei mahinga toi – pēnei i te mea, kātahi nei tētahi ka wehe atu i te rūma.

E arahina ana ngā ringatoi e tō rātou whakapono, e te Hāhi Bahá'í ki te mahi tahi ki ngā tāngata me ngā hapori.

ROBIN WHITE

[born 1946 Ngāti Awa, New Zealand]

EBONIE FIFITA

[born 1984 Tonga, New Zealand]

The perfect silence of the hour 2020

Barkcloth, earth pigments, natural dye
On loan from a private collection

TAMARI CABEIKANACEA

Tamari Cabeikanacea was born on the island of Moce in Fiji's Lau Group. While still at high school, she learned to make *masi* (Fijian barkcloth) from older women in her family.

In 2012, Cabeikanacea moved with her six children to Suva, Fiji's capital city, to give them a good education.

Cabeikanacea maintains her connections with Moce, where she sources the bark of paper mulberry trees from her family's land to make *masi*. She has collaborated with Robin White since 2017.

I whānau a Tamari Cabeikanacea ki te motu o Moce, i Whītī, i te tau 1967. Nōna e kura tuarua ana, ka ākona e ngā kuia o tōna whānau ki te mahi *masi* (he tapa nō Whītī).

I te tau 2012, ka neke a Tamari Cabeikanacea rātou ko āna tamariki tokoono ki Suva, ki te tāone matua o Whītī, e whiwhi ai ki te mātauranga tītike.

Kei te mārō tonu te taura here ki waenga o Cabeikanacea me Moce, ka haere atu ia ki reira ki te koha i ngā kiri o te aute i te papatipu, ki te waihanga *masi*. Mai anō i te tau 2017 e mahi tahi ana rāua ko Robin White.

ROBIN WHITE

[born 1946 Ngāti Awa, New Zealand]

Harbour Cone 1973

Graphite on paper

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of Robert Cox, 2016

Robin White's drawings, watercolours and paintings of Hereweka Harbour Cone each articulate a unique response to the landscape. Although this work shows a very similar view to the painting *Harbour Cone*, 1972, for White it is:

a completely separate thing . . . each medium requires a different approach, a different way of translating the image. I conceive them separately . . . [each work] makes its own demands, it has its own life, its own thing going for it.

He kōrero motuhake a ngā tānga, a ngā peita waikano me ngā mahi peita a Robin White mō Hereweka e whakaahua ana i te takoto o te whenua. Ahakoa he ōrte te tirohanga o tēnei mahinga toi ki tērā i roto i te mahi peita o *Harbour Cone* nō te tau 1972, ki a White:

he rerekē rawa atu tēnei . . . he rerekē te mahi me te rawa toi, he rerekē anō te whakaputanga o te whakaahua. Ka takea mai [ia mahinga toi] i te whakaaro motuhake . . . he tikanga anō, he oranga anō, he wairua anō.