

PETER ROBINSON

[b.1966 New Zealand Kāi Tahu]

Measure of Disorder c. 2007

Polystyrene

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery

Given 2010 by Jim Barr and Mary Barr

In its materials and making, *Measure of Disorder* shares whakapapa with *Ack*, the polystyrene installation that won Robinson the Walters Prize, one of Aotearoa's most significant art prizes, in 2008. Resistant to easy definition, Robinson's large scale sculptural works are often scattered and curious. Here the polystyrene leaps from state to state, generating new questions along the way.

Are we witnessing an excavation or a disintegration? Is this polystyrene still considered waste? How long will it last? Is the object light - about to float away? Or do chains tether it in place, bringing it into new order? Speaking about his practice, Robinson says about these works "*the pleasure is in the process of solving the puzzle - or maybe it's not even solving the puzzle, it's playing with it.*"¹

If Robinson is asking us to play or solve without care for answers, perhaps *Measure of Disorder* is a guide for embracing entropy. In the process of curating this exhibition we, as curators, are occupying the space in-between artist, artwork and audience. We meet limitless potentials and draw endless connections between artworks and ideas. This philosophy of embracing potential extends all the way back to Te Kore - the void, where energy lies in wait.

1. Peter Robinson in conversation with Ed Hanfling, pg. 55. *Creating a Language: A Conversation with Peter Robinson*, Art New Zealand Number 150/ Winter 2014

NĀ MADISON KELLY

RALPH HOTERE

[1931-2013 New Zealand Te Aupōuri, Te Rarawa]

Untitled study of Reclining Female Nude 1969

Pen And Ink Drawing

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery. Given 1978 by Mr Howard Scott.

Untitled Drawing of Two Nude Women c.1971

Ink on paper

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery. Given 1985 by Mrs A W M Hall.

Untitled Drawing of a Woman Reclining on a Couch

1971 Ink on paper

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery. Given 1985 by Mrs A W M Hall.

These pen and ink nudes, made between 1969 and 1971, are just a sample of numerous figurative works produced over Hotere's career. As a rōpū, they signal the strong drawing practice alongside his well known paintings and sculptures.

Life drawings occupy a unique position within art contexts, acting equally as finished works and as personal records. Hotere's ink lines are confident and immediate. They are evidence of a routine where looking is practiced, not taken for granted.

When we 'read' a life drawing, we are not only reading the figure or the space they occupy, but a process of learning and observation. When I was growing up, our home was filled with life drawings by my mother. When I looked at these drawings, I understood how she saw the models - their eyes, their edges, their warm puku.

For our curatorial rōpū, Hotere's drawings carry a similar warmth of line and form - a way of drawing that evokes the physical relationships between body and whenua, rather than the academic (Western) conventions of life drawing.

NĀ MADISON KELLY

ARETA WILKINSON

[b.1969 New Zealand Ngāi Tahu]

Whakapapa VI (1) 2019

Whakapapa VI (2) 2019

Kōkōwai (Red Ochre), Coal, Flax Baling Twine

Collection of the Dunedin School of Art, Otago Polytechnic. Gift of Areta Wilkinson, Kāi Tahu Artist in Residence, 2019.

In 2014, Wilkinson completed her PhD, developing a critical framework of contemporary jewellery as pepeha. Pepeha, as an introduction, is spoken whakapapa, a mihi not only to the ancestors who enabled our existence, but also to our whenua, wai and whānau who come after us.

Kōkōwai (red ochre) has its own rich whakapapa, and was used in whakapaipai (body adornment), carving, trade, and kā tuhituhi o neherā (rock art). Kōkōwai (also known as Maukaroa) has been used by Kāi Tahu for generations. It is a potent material that speaks to an ongoing legacy of production.

The rock art across Te Wai Pounamu is a record of and within the landscape. Holding a multitude of meanings and resistant to academic definition, we as viewers enjoy the many questions about whenua that these ancient forms and their makers offer. By prioritising these questions and the embodied knowledge in mark making, we find new access points into Te Āo Māori, and to understanding whakapapa.

When we follow the kōkōwai marks made by *Whakapapa VI*, we could think of the veins of red clay embedded in Papatūānuku. They allow us to see beyond just the physical materials (pigment and paint), and imagine the whenua (meaning both land and placenta), intergenerational mātauraka and movement of people across Papatūānuku's skin.

NĀ MADISON KELLY AND PIUPIU MAYA TUREI

GEORGINA MAY YOUNG

Tōtara Resonance 2021

Cotton Thread on Handwoven Linen Dyed With Madder, Lichen and Procion Dye

On loan from private collection

Georgina May Young's practice revolves around whenua, whānau and whakapapa. Like an astral projection, she constructs other worlds layer by layer, thread by thread, creating magnified portals into past and future.

An avid gardener and textile artist, Young's work is informed by the process of time, weaving literally and figuratively between ancestral knowledge and optimistic futures.

In *Tōtara Resonance*, the linen canvas is handwoven on a loom, the material dyed with foraged plant materials, madder and lichen, hand embroidered stitches create an intensified landscape and levitating Tōtara branch.

Young's work is a synthesis of traditional techniques and contemporary practice. She starts with collages created in Photoshop and by hand, then applies traditional craft techniques of weaving, hand dyeing and embroidery.

Parts of this work stem from a tramp the artist went on at Aoraki, a Kāi Tahu nohoaka site at Lake Hāwea and a Tōtara tree from her garden. Combining these lived memories creates a whakapapa of imagery from the whenua, resulting in a celebration of mauri.

NĀ AROHA NOVAK

GEORGINA MAY YOUNG

Woven Landscape 2021

Linen cotton and wool remnants gifted by friends, cotton warp
On loan from private collection.

In *Woven Landscape*, we see the same strong ancestral connection to whenua which translates into a respect of natural materials in all of Young's work. Here is an artist thinking about her own ecological footprint and how that is reflected in her mahi toi.

Young collected, and was given, remnants of fabric from friends, which she used to develop this long layered textile work over an extended amount of time. Meticulously weaving each thread onto a loom, a continuous line of intertwining fibres has been created, reflecting the dense colours of dark sky morphing into deep earth. The presence of friends and whānau are literally woven into each strand, referencing and celebrating the rich history of textiles, from practical survival to adornment, linking landscape, home and shelter.

This hanging strata-sphere brings to mind the well-known pūrakau of Ranginui and Papatūānuku. As Tāne, with the help of his brothers, pressed and pushed the two apart, they tore and hacked the binds and sinews that held their parents together. Ever so slowly, the realm of Te Āo was revealed, providing light and life. The parents are forever separated and pining for each other. Raindrops are the tears of Ranginui, lamenting the loss of his love, the mist is the melancholy of Papatūānuku and embodies the only way the two can meet. Perhaps this weaving is that stretched moment of time between the two parents before being forcefully separated by their tamariki, a unique tapestry of colour, form and scale.

NĀ AROHA NOVAK

MARILYNN WEBB

[1937–2021 New Zealand Ngāpuhi]

Baby 3 1990

Monotype

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery. Purchased 1993 with funds from the Dunedin Public Art Gallery Society.

Softly glowing, this monotype is luminous.

Much like Mātauraka Māori, these lines radiate from the baby's ngākau (the seat of affections, heart, mind, soul ¹) out into the body. This fills the baby with the power to kick, grow and flourish. Like plants we are nourished by what we absorb.

Webb is well known for her environmental conservation work. Perhaps in this artwork she is suggesting that we need to pay attention to our own mauri and ihi as well as the spirits of te taiao. After all, we do not live in isolation, but are a part of a vast network of relationships (whakapapa) which extend into the past, present and future.

1. Translation from <https://www.maoridictionary.co.nz/>

NĀ PIUPIU MAYA TUREI

MARILYNN WEBB

[1937-2021 New Zealand Ngāpuhi]

Baby and Fire 1990

Monotype

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery. Purchased 1993 with funds from the Dunedin Public Art Gallery Society.

She plants her garden in alignment with his recommendations, consecrating a holy beauty spot on Papatūānuku's skin.

Our bodies mirror our narratives. Whakapapa is a network of relationships that are the connective fibre between us. Our bloodlines are rivers and inlets. We are inseparable from our surroundings, the world is as much us as we are it.

The process of a baby forming in the whare tangata mirrors Māori creation. First there is Being - the potential of a life ahead. Then there is awareness of fluid, sound, light and hiccups. Then there is a separation, splitting open of the womb, a bloodied emergence into light. Finally, a sudden burst of cold air and sunlight which startles the lungs into breath - tīhei maui ora!

NĀ PIUPIU MAYA TUREI

MATT PINE

[1941–2021 New Zealand Te Ati Haunui-a-Pāpārangi, Te Atiawa, Ngāti Tūwharetoa]

Above Ground Work maquette 1989

Balsa Wood

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery. Commissioned 1989 with funds from the Dunedin Public Art Gallery Society.

This maquette of Matt Pine’s artwork *Above Ground* was commissioned by the Dunedin Public Art Gallery in 1990. The fully realised sculpture now resides in Woodhaugh Gardens, and we highly recommend you visit it. In amongst the ngahere, *Above Ground* is enmeshed in the landscape. It is a public sculpture at home in the forest with joggers and kids on bikes moving through it. This maquette is nestled in amongst books that have been recommended to us by people who have helped on our journey of exploring Mātauraka Māori.

Woodhaugh Gardens was once a kahikatea forest and is still home to some of the tallest trees in the nation. Pine’s work, made from Southern Totara, encompasses a view of the world where everything is in conversation. There is a palpable presence of memory, absence and interconnected networks of relationships. Time is collapsed through the minimal design of the work moving seamlessly between states of creation, occupation and disintegration.

NĀ PIUPIU MAYA TUREI

SHONĀ RĀPIRA DAVIES

[b.1951 New Zealand Ngātiwai, Ngāpuhi]

Maquette for the Poles that Hold up the Sky

1991

Timber, Felt, Terracotta

Dunedin Public Art Gallery Loan Collection. Purchased 1991 with funds from the Dunedin Public Art Gallery Society.

Two Poles that Hold Up The Sky speaks to the physicality of history. Te Wehenga ō Ranginui rāua ko Papatūānuku is not a metaphor, but a bloodied moment in time. This maquette by Rapira Davies has two bigger siblings. One is present in the exhibition *Hurahia ana kā Whetū* (the current DPAG collection exhibition), and the other at Kōputai Sculpture Garden in Port Chalmers. We encourage you to visit both tuakana.

Maquettes hold a great amount of potential - they are perpetually in Te Pō - a point to leap from. They show the process of development, the gestation and birth of an artist's idea. This is like 28 week ultrasound through a pregnant belly, a snapshot of the potential held within.

NĀ PIUPIU MAYA TUREI

AYDRIANNAH TUIALI'I

Kōwhai 2017

HD Video, Colour, Sound, 1 Min 35 Secs

Courtesy of the artist

Kōwhai is a meditation on growth, learning, joy, grief and a commitment to regenerate Te Reo Māori.

Waiata is a medium dense with knowledge that holistically unifies us as Māori, and is an access point to internal emotional reflection. The vibrant kōwhai yellow indicates a time of bloom, the celebration of new growth after a dormant period. Kōwhai need to grow for at least seven years before they bloom, a relatively long juvenile dormancy that reflects the process of learning Te Reo Māori as an adult, and the first in many generations within a family.

As Māori we share a history where our parents, grandparents and great grandparents were suppressed from speaking, learning and passing on Te Reo Māori by the Crown. In response to this loss and the subsequent efforts by many Māori to reclaim Te Reo, Tuiali'i embraces vulnerability of not being raised fluent, but remains committed to upholding the mana of Te Reo Māori and the active regeneration of our rich world of oral communication.

NĀ MYA MORRISON MIDDLETON

FIONA PARDINGTON

[b.1961 New Zealand Kāi Tahu]

Still Life with Tī Kōuka Pannicle and Heitiki 2011

Pigment inks on Hahnemuhle photo rag 308gsm paper

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery

The velvety layers of darkness in *Still Life with Tī Kōuka Pannicle and Heitiki* recall the many realms of Te Pō. Pardington's photographs often avoid clear recognition of forms or objects, allowing subjects to remain sovereign within the unknown.

Vanitas is a style of still life painting popular during the 17th Century in the Netherlands. Vanitas use objects to symbolise religiously influenced moral messages about the impermanence of earthly pleasures, the fleeting nature of time and the certainty of death.

A skull, or pannicle, is characteristic of Vanitas, as a reminder of mortality. A fallen bottle symbolises fragility or a fall from grace. The Heitiki's eyes glow, revealing mauri from deep within and perhaps symbolising fertility, spirituality and whakapapa. The Tī Kōuka panicle of flowers could allude to the cyclical patterns of life, death and regeneration. This is ironic as Tī Kōuka are notoriously immortal, being dubbed the Medusa plant, captured in the whakatauki "Ehara i te tī, e wana ake" - *unlike the Tī Kōuka, once our heads are cut off, we will never bud.*

The management of Pounamu and Tī Kōuka (as mahika kai), among all other Ngāi Tahu resources, has been fought for fiercely by dedicated iwi members, especially with Te Kerēme (The Ngāi Tahu treaty claim). When kaumātua pass we say "Kua hinga te rākau" - *A tree has fallen.* Although as Ngāi Tahu people we are mortal, through connection to our resources and whakapapa, we will always regenerate.

NĀ MYA MORRISON MIDDLETON

E Hine

Waiata. Kaitito: HANA O'REGAN [b. 1973 Kāi Tahu]

This waiata was composed by Hana O'Regan to recognize the signing of the Kāi Tahu settlement with the Crown. The waiata speaks to the unbreakable bond Kāi Tahu whānui have to the whenua of Te Wai Pounamu, the mamae of dislocation caused by colonisation and is a testament to the work of many people to reach the signing of the Settlement. This waiata celebrates the future through the Tatau Pounamu.

Kupu and whakaaro for this waiata have been sourced from Kotahi Mano Kāika (www.kmk.maori.nz).

Listen to this waiata in the reading nook, by using the touch screen and headphones. Please sanitise the headphones before and after use with the provided wipes.

NĀ PIUPIU MAYA TUREI

Ko Te Pū

Waiata

Ko Te Pū recounts the creation of the universe, beginning with the root of everything. As this waiata progresses, so does our understanding of the formation of te Āo Mārama. From root, to vine, to conception, to darkness, to form, to kā Ātua, to the beginning of the world as we know it.

This is the waiata sung in *Kōwhai*, a moving image artwork from Aydriannah Tuiali'i. She learnt this waiata while studying Te Reo Māori, and it is used extensively as a teaching tool. The actions and words of this waiata are deceptively simple – holding a wealth of Mātauraka.

NĀ PIUPIU MAYA TUREI

Manu Tiria

Waiata Tāwhito

This waiata tells the story of Māui changing into a Kererū and following his father to the underworld. This journey is traced through the kupu of the waiata, which is strongly poetic in form. In this narrative, Māui brings kūmara back for us. The kūmara is both substance for the body and for the mind, acting as a metaphor for the acquisition of knowledge.

Kupu and whakaaro for this waiata have been sourced from Kotahi Mano Kāika (www.kmk.maori.nz).

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NĀ PIUPIU MAYA TUREI

Kia ora,

Please read these books in our cosy reading nook and once you are finished, leave them here for others to enjoy.

Choose an album on the touch screen and listen to wonderful waiata from Kotahi Mano Kāika.
