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Preparations for Landing—*Paemanu: Tauraka Toi*

Abstract

*Since 2018, a kin group of Kāi Tahu contemporary artists called Paemanu has worked collaboratively with the Dunedin Public Art Gallery (DPAG)—established in 1884 and home of the oldest art collection in Aotearoa New Zealand—to see Māori values and concepts introduced into and intersect at the art institution. The group’s goals have been realised through the collaborative permanent collection exhibition *Hurahia ana kā Whetū: Unveiling the Stars at DPAG* (June 2021–April 2023); the enhanced role of the DPAG curatorial intern; the exhibition *He reka te Kūmara* (November 2021–March 2022) by emerging Māori curators; the establishment of the Paemanu Art Collection; and Paemanu’s self-determined exhibition at DPAG, *Paemanu: Tauraka Toi—A Landing Place* (December 2021–April 2022). This article discusses and celebrates the ways Kāi Tahu Māori contemporary visual culture has been elevated throughout DPAG for the first time in the institution’s history. It describes the *tino rangatiratanga* (self-determination) by Kāi Tahu Māori artists to change up the gallery experience at DPAG so that *Mana Whenua* (the people of the land) are finally visible and are sensed throughout.*

Keywords: *Māori art, tino rangatiratanga, self-determination, cultural identity, contemporary art, Māori and Indigenous methodologies, Kaupapa Māori Theory, Paemanu: Ngāi Tahu Contemporary Visual Arts, museums, Indigenous curation, settler colonialism, Aotearoa New Zealand, art exhibitions, biculturalism, First Nations*

Paemanu, a kin group of Māori contemporary artists with Kāi Tahu ancestry (Fig. 1), has worked collaboratively with the Dunedin Public Art Gallery (DPAG), Aotearoa New Zealand, since 2018, motivated by a mutual desire to see Māori values and concepts intersecting at the art institution.¹ This desire has been realised in multiple ways, namely through the collaborative exhibition *Hurahia ana kā Whetū: Unveiling the Stars* at DPAG (June 2021–April 2023); the newly enhanced role of the DPAG curatorial intern; the exhibition *He reka te Kūmara* (November 2021–March 2022) by emerging Māori curators; the Paemanu Art Collection, a

new collection of Kāi Tahu contemporary artworks created and owned by Paemanu artists; and Paemanu's self-determined exhibition at DPAG, *Paemanu: Tauraka Toi—A Landing Place* (December 2021–April 2022). This article discusses and celebrates the ways Kāi Tahu Māori contemporary visual culture has been elevated throughout DPAG for the first time in the institution's history.



Figure 1. The Paemanu team and Dunedin Public Art Gallery staff at the opening of *Paemanu: Tauraka Toi*, December 11, 2021, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand. Courtesy of Paemanu Charitable Trust

Hoea rā te waka nei (paddle this canoe)

Between 2018 and 2022 a relationship was formed between DPAG, established in 1884 and home to the oldest art collection in Aotearoa; the Paemanu Charitable Trust; and twelve Paemanu curatorial artists.² In 2018, Paemanu was invited to create an exhibition at DPAG. The title of the exhibition, *Paemanu: Tauraka Toi*, describes a landing place for Māori art, with *tauraka* meaning the anchorage of

waka (watercraft). The name references the project's significant role as the inaugural landfall of our own Paemanu Art Collection of Kāi Tahu contemporary art at DPAG.

As with any new encounter, before embarking on a journey with DPAG, Paemanu had to understand where we were going. Following *tikanga*, our Māori customary protocols, we asked ourselves: *Who is here? Who holds the mana, the cultural authority, over this area of land?* In Aotearoa, *Mana Whenua* (the Indigenous people) have historic and territorial rights over land recognised by the country's founding document, Te Tiriti o Waitangi (the Treaty of Waitangi) of 1840. Kāi Tahu *rūnaka* (tribal councils) have recognised cultural authority over regions.



Figure 2a. Left to right: Cam McCracken, director of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery and Ross Hemera (Kāi Tahu) of Paemanu at the ceremonial blessing and formal placement of three *kōhatu mauri* stones at the Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand, 9 December 2019. Courtesy of Dunedin Public Art Gallery

In the summer of 2019, members of Paemanu travelled to the Otago region and met with three *rūnaka* to let them know about our intention to exhibit in Dunedin and to ask for their support. From the *rūnaka* of Puketeraki, Moeraki, and Ōtākou, we were given three *kōhatu mauri*, named sacred stones with associated stories, for us to place at DPAG as cultural markers.³ These *kōhatu mauri* are the first physical and spiritual presence of *Mana Whenua* that visitors encounter upon entering DPAG (Fig. 2a–b). Their purpose is to imbue the gallery with their life force; visitors are invited to pause and touch them. DPAG staff value and care for the stones but they are inextricably linked with *Mana Whenua*. Paemanu

can move the stones; we can take them away temporarily on a trip, and we can even remove them permanently if we become unhappy with their situation.



Figure 2b. Object label for the *kōhatu mauri* stones, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Aotearoa New Zealand. Courtesy of Dunedin Public Art Gallery

Encountering the Ancestors of DPAG's Collecting History

Paemanu next sought to understand: *Who is here at DPAG? Who are the ancestors of this art gallery? A waka (watercraft) becomes a whare (house) when overturned on dry land and placed on four pou (posts).* To understand the genealogy of DPAG, we asked staff to tell us about their *pou*, the founders of the institution holding up the house of art we would enter. In response to our inquiry, DPAG presented us with a list of fifteen artworks representing the establishment of the institution's collection and its journey up until the present. It was a truth-telling moment, as not one of the listed artworks, makers or donors represented our Kāi Tahu communities; our Kāi Tahu ancestors and *Tangata Whenua* (Indigenous people of Aotearoa) were not part of this founding system.

In response to this, Paemanu undertook a process of inquiry about DPAG’s collection, asking whether *any* artworks by Kāi Tahu artists, by Māori or of Māori, or representing other related cultural communities were in the collection. Curatorial staff would diligently do research and come back to us. In addition, we slept in the gallery to get a feel for the place, we visited DPAG’s earth-floor basement and art storerooms, and shared food with gallery staff. Out at the Otākou *kaik* (seaside village) Paemanu collected seafood and hosted both kin and DPAG staff as part of a slow, relational process. Through this *whānaungataka* (being together), we all got to know each other more.

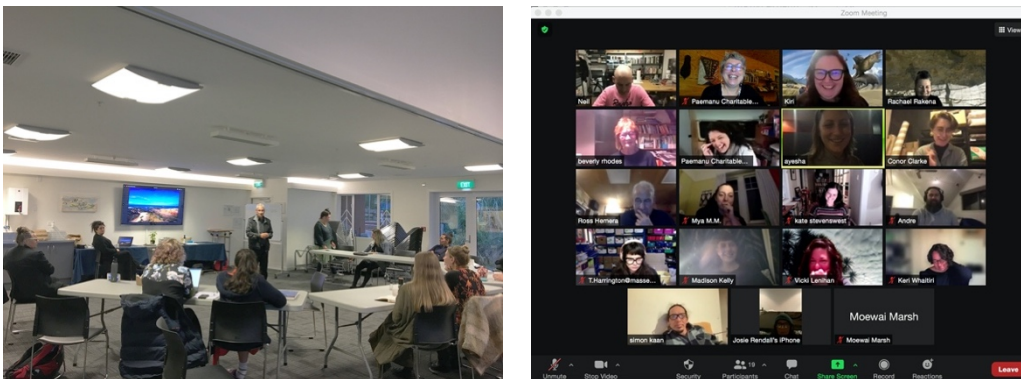


Figure 3. *Wānanga* (workshopping) at Ōtakou Marae, April 9–11, 2021 and over Zoom, September 3, 2021. Courtesy of Paemanu Charitable Trust

Ako Māori, the appropriate transmission of Māori knowledge, is a highly valued principle of *kaupapa* Māori, literally meaning “a Māori way.”⁴ *Kaupapa* Māori incorporates critical Indigenous philosophy and practice that reflect Māori cultural values. As Kāi Tahu artists, our preferred cultural method of sharing knowledge is to *wānanga* (meet and discuss) face to face and learn collectively (Figs. 3–4). Our preference is always to stay over on *marae* (meeting houses) (Fig. 4) or in *whānau* (family) homes so we can gather, cook, and share food in addition to working together in online meet-ups. We all have individual art practices but the collaborative practice of Paemanu is figuring out the *tīkanga* for our contemporary art contexts—that is, the right cultural way to do things that is collectively responsible and elevates Kāi Tahu knowledge systems and values. Tribal relationships are complex even for Māori. Paemanu members are often learning from our mistakes and, thankfully, our kin are very forgiving.



Figure 4. *Wānanga* (workshopping) at Ōtakou Marae, April 9–11, 2021. Courtesy of Paemanu Charitable Trust

The process of *wānanga* (meet and discuss) led to Paemanu identifying DPAG’s holdings—Dunedin’s beloved art collection, built on substantial philanthropy since the nineteenth century—as a colonial system of wealthy gift-giving and status. In those establishment years, DPAG’s high investment in cultural values as represented by European art and culture was made with the intention of educating the general public through access. However, because the founding ancestors of DPAG did not value and collect Indigenous artforms, none entered the collection. In more recent times, Kāi Tahu and Māori art has been exhibited but has remained underrepresented in the collection over its 137-year history.

DPAG staff recognised inquiry into the institution’s founding and collection history as a potential curatorial premise for the new installation of their permanent collection, which was due to open in June 2021, six months prior to *Paemanu: Tauraka Toi*. It was clear to both parties that a collaboration with Paemanu was essential to expand their concept further to include non-founder narratives. Here was an opportunity to counterbalance the colonial narrative and include our Kāi Tahu Māori community and perspectives. Through *kōrero* (many conversations) with DPAG, we shifted staff attention to the absence of Kāi Tahu in their story, colonial trauma, broader community representation, alternative worldview interpretations, and relationships with Mana Whenua.



Figure 4a. Foreground: Shona Rapira Davies (Ngātiwai), *Prototype for the Poles that Hold up the Sky*, 1991. Terracotta, timber, 1600 x 820 x 800 mm. On walls, left to right: Sydney Lough Thompson, *Lady McLean*, 1907. Oil on canvas, 1005 x 750 mm; and James Crowe Richmond, *Mount Excelsior Takitimo (sic) Range. Southland NZ*, 1887. Watercolour on paper, 516 x 751 mm. On view in *Hurahia ana kā Whetū: Unveiling the Stars*, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand, June 12–April 30, 2023. Courtesy of Dunedin Public Art Gallery

If Paemanu and DPAG were to curate as genuine collaborators, our co-created exhibition needed to include representation of all our art ancestors, from European art history and Kāi Tahu Māori art history, not only those represented in the institution’s founding story. Paemanu required our art ancestors to be visible to us, so when we landed our exhibition, *Paemanu: Tauraka Toi*, our contemporary artworks could greet the historic artworks, according to Māori rituals of encounter. Therefore, a visitor’s first encounter in our collaborative exhibition is with the First Peoples, first determined through the *kōhatu mauri* stones (Fig. 2a).

Hurahia ana kā Whetū: Unveiling the Stars

The permanent collection exhibition that resulted from the collaboration of Paemanu and DPAG is aptly called *Hurahia ana kā Whetū* (unveiling the stars). The title conceptually reflects how the art ancestors of the DPAG collection, including Māori artists, are the stars that illuminate a path for those of us who come after. The artworks that visitors first encounter upon entering the show are by Kāi Tahu artists—Cath Brown, a champion for contemporary Kāi Tahu arts who has now passed on, and Ross Hemera, an esteemed elder of Paemanu (Fig. 6a). The *kāranga* is a welcoming call in Māori ritual only to be performed by Māori women, so it is Cath Brown’s artwork *Kāranga* (2002) that directly acknowledges visitors and draws them into *Hurahia ana kā Whetū* to view our exhibition. Māori and other related cultural communities, such as Pasifika and Chinese kin, represented in the Paemanu *whanau* (kin), are now also celebrated in the DPAG permanent collection exhibition.

At first, the DPAG public art collection overwhelmed us with its surplus of sublime depictions of scenic Aotearoa landscapes painted by European artists most often not depicting New Zealand light. We felt the heavy absence of representation of how we, as Māori, understand land and place—our worldview expressed through art. Our relationships to *whenua* (land) include an umbilical, bodily link to the primordial earth mother. One way we addressed this imbalance was by installing, amongst many selected artworks exploring the Aotearoa landscape, a 1991 artwork by Ngātiwai artist Shona Rapira Davies, *Prototype for the Poles That Hold up the Sky* (Fig. 4a). This clay sculpture conveys a Māori creation story about how the world of light came to be. In the same room are historic oil paintings such as *A Waterfall in the Otira Gorge* (1891) by Petrus van der Velden, made exactly one hundred years earlier (Fig. 4b) that well illustrates New Zealand light.



Figure 4b. Petrus van der Velden (Dutch/New Zealand 1837-1913), *A Waterfall in the Otira Gorge*, 1891. Oil on canvas, 1130 x 1935 mm, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand. Courtesy of Dunedin Public Art Gallery



Figure 5. Left to right: Peter Robinson (Kāi Tahu, Kāti Kuri), *Untitled*, 1994. Wood, acrylic, oil stick, light bulb, tin, wool, 210 x 1630 x 1700 mm; and Thomas Gainsborough and John Hoppner, *Charlotte, Countess Talbot*, c. 1784. Oil on canvas, 2720 x 1810 mm. Michael Parekōwhai (Ngā Ariki, Ngā Tai Whakaronga), *Constitution Hill*, 2011. Bronze 1010 x 250 x 250 mm. On view in *Hurahia ana kā Whetū: Unveiling the Stars*, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand, June 12–April 30, 2023. Courtesy of Dunedin Public Art Gallery

In another section of the exhibition, internationally recognised Māori artists such as Peter Robinson (Kāi Tahu, Kāti Kuri) and Michael Parekōwhai (Ngā Ariki, Ngā Tai Whakaronga) are celebrated alongside Thomas Gainsborough and John Hoppner for their international art history contributions (Fig. 5).



Figure 6a. Installation view of *Hurahia ana kā Whetū: Unveiling the Stars*, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand, June 12–April 30, 2023. Left to right: Ross Hemera (Kāi Tahu) *Kua hoki mai ngā Karae*, 2021. Pencil, *paua* (Haliotis iris, a mollusc), *maukoroa* (ochre), *ngārehu* (charcoal), dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist and Dunedin Public Art Gallery; Cath Brown (Kāi Tahu), *Karanga Ngāi Tahu II*, 2002. Clay, *harakeke* (New Zealand flax, Phormium tenax), *paua* (Haliotis iris, a mollusc), feathers, 550 x 250 x 250 mm. Courtesy of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu and the artist's family

DPAG, like any public art gallery, occupies a position of authority; it has the power to construct cultural narratives and preserve civic memory by privileging certain ways of collecting, preserving, documenting, and interpreting material culture. A public art collection should reflect the multiple heritage stories of its place and community. The telling of national art and cultural histories in Aotearoa has often edited out or misrepresented Māori and minority cultural histories. The premise of *Hurahia ana kā Whetū* moved DPAG curatorial focus away from the ancestral founders of DPAG, their colonial perspectives and elevation of European art, toward broader key values and fairer representation of Dunedin community.

“People,” “Place & Identity,” “Global Networks,” and “The Power of Art” became the four *pou* of a curatorial framework used to acknowledge, understand, and install new connections across the collection.

KĀ HONOKA ME KĀ TUKUKA IHOTAKA

He whakatereka hou e tere ana Te Whare Toi Tūmatawhānui o Ōtepoti. I tā rātou huaki i te whare toi katoa ki te Paemanu, ko whakawātea te wāhi mō mātou. Ko ā mātou whāika tahi, ko te raraka i te taukaea takata e whai mana ai tētahi ki tētahi, kia whakatau ai he ura e mau whānui ana e haere ake nei. Ki te renarena taua taukaea rā, me tōkeke te mana a tēnei whenu, a tēnā whenu.

He mana nui tō te whakanōhaka o kā whare toi tūmatawhānui e waihaka ana i te kōrero ā-iwi, ā, e tārokitia ana te māharataka rarapori i tana kōhi, i tana whakamāori hoki i kā rawa toi o te ahurea. E whakaata ana te kohikohika toi i kā tāhūhū kōrero mātinitini o te wāhi, o te hapori, ā, o te iwi nāna anō i whakatū. I tere tūtuhutia e te Paemanu tētahi kohikohika tokarerewa i tōna wā, ko hakaia ki kā wawata o taipūwhenua me te aroha, ekari, ko mū kē, ko whakatokā kē te tirohaka ā-ao o te iwi taketake. I te haereka o te wā, kihai kā rika toi mana whenua, ko ā rātou kōrero rānei, i tino whai wāhi ki tēnei kohikohika. I karakahia e te Paemanu kā mahi toi nā te rika toi Māori me te rika toi Pasifika kia noho ai rātou ki te kohikohika pūmau o tēnei whakaaturaka, kia mihian ai ō mātou whānau, kia whakatinanahia hoki kā mahi me mahi kia tutuki ai i kā wawata o te Tiriti. He mana nui nō Kāi Tahu, nō te takata whenua hoki, nā reira me whao ā rātou kōrero ki kā pātū o te Te Whare Toi Tūmatawhānui o Ōtepoti.

Ki tēnei whakaaturaka, ka kana ki te whakahou i te tāhūhū kōrero ki te kōrero hoki ki te whānui tou o kā wawata o tuauki, tae noa atu ki te ariā, ki te pūrakahotaka, ā, ki te oraka hoki. Ko te mahi kātahitaka, ko te akoakotaka, ko te whakahokika hoki he āhuataka mātuatua o te wetetāmi i kā kohikohika. Mā ēnei tukaka tētahi kohikohika o-nehe, e honoa ana kā hono, e whakawātea ana kā wāhi, e whakaputaina atu ana kā kōrero ātete.

E tāraia toutia ana tēnei tāhūhū kōrero.

CONNECTIONS AND LEGACIES

A new navigational journey is being taken by the Dunedin Public Art Gallery. Opening the whole gallery to Paemanu kaupapa, they have committed to create space for us. Our shared objectives are to establish a relationship that acknowledges each other’s mana, and to find common values that will prevail into the future. To form a beneficial relationship mana must meet mana - equally.

A public gallery is a powerful authority, constructing cultural narratives and preserving civic memory by collecting, and interpreting material culture. An art collection reflects multiple stories of place, community and the people who have founded it. Paemanu quickly identified a beloved permanent collection of its time, built on colonial aspirations and philanthropy, but established without value for indigenous perspectives. Over time, mana whenua artists and stories have not been well represented in the collection. Paemanu called on works by all Māori and Pasifika artists in the permanent collection for this exhibition to mihi to our whānau, and to show the work that needs to be done to meet shared Tiriti aspirations. Kāi Tahu and takata whenua are part of this community and need to be in the Dunedin Public Art Gallery story.

We aim to refresh historical narratives and speak to legacy aspirations including visibility, understanding and healing. Collaboration, consultation, and repatriation are key components of decolonising gallery collections. Through these processes, an historical collection can be used to make connections, open space and reveal a counter narrative.

This is legacy work happening now.

Figure 6b. Introductory panels in *Hurahia ana kā Whetū: Unveiling the Stars*, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand, June 12–April 30, 2023. Courtesy of Dunedin Public Art Gallery



Figure 7a. Rachael Rakena (Ngāpuhi, Kāi Tahu), *Iwidotnz 008*, 2002. Digital photograph on aluminium, 1250 x 1000 mm. On view in *Paemanu: Tauraka Toi*, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand, December 11, 2021, to April 25, 2022. Courtesy of the artist, Paemanu Charitable Trust, and Dunedin Public Art Gallery

RACHAEL RAKENA

[b.1969 New Zealand Ngāpuhi, Ngāi Tahu]

Iwidotnz 008 2003

Digital photograph on aluminium

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery

Given 2010 anonymously

**WAI?
WAI
WAIA
WAIATA
WAIORA
WAI POUNAMU, TE
WAIPUNA
WAIRUA
WAITOHU**

**WHO? WHOM?
WATER, STREAM, TEARS
TO BE ACCUSTOMED TO, FAMILIAR WITH,
USED TO, PRACTISED
SONG, CHANT, PSALM
HEALTH, SOUNDNESS
SOUTH ISLAND, GREENSTONE VALLEY
SPRING OF WATER
SPIRIT,
SOUL - SPIRIT OF A PERSON WHICH EXISTS
BEYOND DEATH
TO MARK, SIGNIFY, INDICATE**

AN 2021

Figure 7b. Wall label for Rachael Rakena (Ngāpuhi, Kāi Tahu), *Iwidotnz 008*, 2002. Digital photograph on aluminium, 1250 x 1000 mm. On view in *Paemanu: Tauraka Toi*, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand, December 11, 2021, to April 25, 2022. Courtesy of the artist, Paemanu Charitable Trust, and Dunedin Public Art Gallery



Figure 7c. Kura Te Waru Te Rewiri (Ngāti Kahu, Ngāpuhi, Ngāto Kauwhata, Ngāti Rangi), *Untitled*, 1991. Acrylic on plywood, 1295 x 799 mm. On view in *Paemanu: Tauraka Toi*, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand, December 11, 2021, to April 25, 2022. Courtesy of Dunedin Public Art Gallery

KURA TE WARU REWIRI

[b.1950 New Zealand Ngāti Kahu, Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Kauwhata, Ngāti Rangī]

Untitled 1991

Acrylic on plywood

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery

Purchased 1991 with funds from the Dunedin Public Art Gallery Society

In the work of Kura Te Waru Rewiri (Ngāti Kahu, Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Kauwhata, Ngāti Rangī), Māori knowledge systems inform the shape and meaning of her visual explorations where 'Objects, colour and form become imbued with Māori spiritual and cultural encoding that requires the viewer to decipher elements of a visual language that is specifically centred in an appreciation of Māori knowledge systems.'¹ In this way, Te Waru Rewiri's paintings, like this one, navigate sacred spaces (tapu), and whenua is central: 'whenua is the fundamental basis for her journey as a painter...² [and] in all her work she represents the land below the surface where the memory is stored and the placenta is buried.'³

1. N. Borell and Mangere Arts Centre (eds) *Kura: Story of a Maori Woman Artist* (Auckland: Mangere Arts Centre, 2011), 20 in Belinda Borell et al., 'Beyond the veil: Kaupapa Māori gaze on the non-Māori subject', *Journal of Sociology, Special Issue - Indigenous Sociology: Contemporary Theoretical Perspectives*, Volume: 56 issue: 2 (197-212) <https://doi.org/10.1177/1440783319893503>

2. Camilla Highfield, *Kura Te Waru Rewiri: A Maori Woman Artist* (Wellington: Gilt Edge Publishing, 1999), 15.

3. Camilla Highfield, *Kura Te Waru Rewiri: A Maori Woman Artist* (Wellington: Gilt Edge Publishing, 1999). [Whenua, the word for land, is the same word for placenta. Meaning derives from Papatūānuku (mother earth) who gave birth to all life.]

Figure 7d. Wall label for Kura Te Waru Te Rewiri (Ngāti Kahu, Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Kauwhata, Ngāti Rangī), *Untitled*, 1991. Acrylic on plywood, 1295 x 799 mm. On view in *Paemanu: Tauraka Toi*, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand, December 11, 2021, to April 25, 2022. Courtesy of Dunedin Public Art Gallery



Figure 8. Educational activity sheets created for *Paemanu: Tauraka Toi*, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand, December 11, 2021 to April 25, 2022. Courtesy of Dunedin Public Art Gallery

He reka te Kūmara: knowledge passed on

To further encourage *ako* (the appropriate transmission of knowledge), Paemanu prioritised the support of emerging practitioners as central to our future-focused mission statement. We saw the annual DPAG curatorial internship as another opportunity to collaborate, and one that would implement *ako*. In partnership, DPAG and Paemanu enhanced the curatorial intern job description to privilege expertise in *mātauranga* Māori (Māori knowledge of language and customs) and added curatorial qualifications to attract an experienced bi-cultural curator who could support our project. The successful intern candidate, Piupiu Maya Turei (Ngāti Kahungunu, Rangitāne, Te Ātihaunui-a-Pāpārangi), made a unique cultural contribution to the DPAG gallery team and Paemanu show, including creating activities through which young visitors can access Māori knowledge. A children's activity sheet includes cultural insight into *kōwhaiwhai* the painted panels of the meeting house, painted portraits of ancestors, and Araiteuru, the principal seafaring vessel of *mana whenua* (Fig. 8). This waka capsized and all that remains now are con-creted cargo (Moerāki Boulders) on the beach revered by Kāi Tahu.

The DPAG curatorial intern, Turei, sought to expand the job's role by collaborating with three other emerging Māori curators: Madison Kelly (Kāi Tahu), Mya Morrison-Middleton (Kāi Tahu), and Aroha Novak (Ngāi te Rangi, Tūhoe, Ngāti Kahungunu). Their resulting exhibition, *He reka te Kūmara*, references the *kūmara*, a sweet root vegetable that is a cultural symbol for knowledge passed on through many connected vines (Fig. 9). In the exhibition, the curators explore *pūrakau* (oral traditions), *waiata* (song), and *toi* (art) as multimedia Indigenous knowledge systems that convey information, wisdom, and spirituality.



Figure 9. Entry into *He reka te Kūmara*, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand, November 13, 2021–March 21, 2022. Left to right: Marilynn Webb (Ngāti Kahu, Te Roroa), *Baby 3*, 1990, monotype, plate size 855 x 615 mm; and *Baby and Fire*, 1990, monotype, plate size 855 x 615 mm. Courtesy of Dunedin Public Art Gallery

Paemanu: Tauraka Toi—A Landing Place

In the next phase of our collaboration with DPAG, Paemanu produced a self-determined exhibition, *Paemanu: Tauraka Toi*, which included our own artwork. The creative concept of *waka* encompassed creation stories, ancestral tribal narratives, Pacific migration, Kāi Tahu history, coastal and inland travel, environment and resource gathering practices, and identity markers. The exhibition *āhua* (form) developed through *wānanga* led by the twelve Kāi Tahu curatorial artists involved: Ayesha Green, Ross Hemera, Lonnie Hutchinson, Kiri Jarden, Simon Kaan, Martin Langdon, Vicki Lenihan, Nathan Pohio, Rachael Rakena, Peter Robinson, Rongomaiaia Te Whaiti, and Areta Wilkinson. These lead artists steered our *waka* of art by sharing curatorial responsibilities including supporting other artists in the show, assisted by our Paemanu project manager, Natalie Jones. DPAG staff enabled and assisted our process as it developed. As we held legacy aspirations of a vibrant Kāi Tahu visual culture for future generations, we knew the project had to make a positive impact beyond the exhibition. Paemanu was quick to recognise

both the influence of benefaction and the power of public collections in what cultural stories they do or do not reflect. We appropriated the patronage model to advance our vision. We secured national arts grants and tribal funding to support the creation of artworks for our exhibition and to form our own Indigenous art collection, jointly owned by the artists in Paemanu and our legal entity, Paemanu Charitable Trust. The Paemanu Art Collection—made up of new Kāi Tahu contemporary artworks created and owned by Paemanu artists and on loan to the DPAG—is the first of its kind in Aotearoa New Zealand. In the future, its artworks will be available for loan to any public institution or tribal organisation (including *Mana Whenua*) with cultural conditions and protocols.

In *wānanga*, Paemanu asked, *Who will we take with us into the gallery and into our art collection?* The answer was “All of us, or as many as possible!” We sent invitations to as many practicing contemporary Kāi Tahu artists as we could identify, asking them to join us on our *waka* journey into DPAG through *Paemanu: Tauraka Toi*. As a result, fifty Kāi Tahu artists—from emerging to established—and six Kāi Tahu writers participated.



Figure 10. Beverly Rhodes (Kāi Tahu, Ngāi Tūāhuriri), *The land of the red earth: Ōtākou*, 2021. Oil, canvas, 1200 x 1200 mm. On view in *Paemanu: Tauraka Toi*, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand, December 11, 2021, to April 25, 2022. Courtesy of the artist, Paemanu Charitable Trust, and Dunedin Public Art Gallery

Paemanu: Tauraka Toi was a mixture of solo works, artist collaborations, and community projects exploring the theme of *waka*. Five Kāi Tahu themes provided a structure for the exhibition layout and wayfinding movement. *Waka Tūpuna* (Figs. 10–12) included themes of ancestry, remembering, and visioning; in *Whakahekeka o kā Roimata* (Figs. 13–14) artworks explored trailing, migration, and identity markers; *Whakawhitika* (Figs. 15–16) related to flora, fauna, conveyance, and waterways; *Ko te wai, he wai ora* (Fig. 17) dealt with environmental brutality and sustainability; and *Tohorā* (Figs. 18–19) explored navigation, guidance, and sustenance. *Tauhokohoko* was a trading post that provided Kāi Tahu goods for purchase. We hoped indigenising the curatorial approach which made sense to us, would attract Māori communities who largely do not feel at home in public galleries.

Public programs oriented toward *whānau* (family)—through *wānanga* (workshops) at the gallery or *marae* (meeting houses)—were specifically developed to include our extended kin of *Mana Whenua* as contributors to the exhibition. One program, led by painter Ayesha Green, focused on *tūpuna* (ancestor) portraits (Figs. 20–21). Painted or photographic portraits of ancestors are a common sight in many *marae*, where they honour those who have passed and acknowledge the *whakapapa* (genealogical connections) that exist between people and place. Following Green’s method, family members painted their loved ones and these tributes were installed in the exhibition alongside her own *tūpuna* paintings. Another program, led by Kaihaukai Collective (Simon Kaan and Ron Bull), was a workshop on customary foods such as *tuaki* (clams), *tītī* (sooty shearwater, a seabird), and *pātiki* (flounder), with local chefs producing unique food experiences for the opening event (Fig. 22).

Other public programs included live performances of contemporary Māori music with traditional instruments, a mural project created in *wānanga* (workshopping) with *rangatahi* (youth) artists, discussions about professional practice for writers and artists, and drop-in *rāranga* (weaving) sessions (Fig. 23). These activities served not only as public events but also as authentic opportunities for Kāi Tahu people to practice, grow, and share Kāi Tahu Māori knowledge. As Kāi Tahu artists, we are exploring our identity through artmaking, but we cannot do this without our Kāi Tahu kin—other Kāi Tahu artists and their cultural expression, and *whānui* (our extended family across subtribes). At the conclusion of *Paemanu: Tauraka Toi*, DPAG accepted the position of *taongatiaki* (guardian) for both the Paemanu Art Collection and the *kōhatu mauri* remaining in its care. The commissioned mural *Bloodline* by Zoe Hall will continue to illuminate the DPAG rear foyer

and is already providing the Gallery with a visual educational resource about the Kāi Tahu creation narrative it represents (Fig. 24).



Figure 11. Areta Wilkinson (Kāi Tahu, Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairarapa), *Star Whata. Space Odyssey 2021*, 2021. Mixed media, 2600 x 1900 x 790 mm. On view in *Paemanu: Tauraka Toi*, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand, December 11, 2021 to April 25, 2022. Courtesy of the artist, Paemanu Charitable Trust, and Dunedin Public Art Gallery

Whakamānu / whakamanu: The art waka floats and the birds fly

Māori worldview is now elevated across DPAG, framed by Paemanu's desire to see Kāi Tahu values, concepts, and ideas intersecting on the site of a colonial art gallery and by DPAG's commitment to partnership. The values of *Mana Whenua*

and Paemanu now permeate the entire DPAG building, starting with the *kōhatu mauri* at the entrance (Fig. 2a). Kāi Tahu and Māori perspectives are seen, heard, and felt throughout and across all exhibitions and public programming. Landing our art at DPAG is a claiming of space for our Kāi Tahu artforms, for our *whānau* and *iwi* (our families and tribe), and for communities of Dunedin. The *kōhatu mauri* have been working hard with their life force and our Kāi Tahu narratives are now visible to all of us.



Figure 12. Simone Montgomery (Waitaha, Kāti Mamoe, Kāi Tahu), *For Titi Palmer*, 2021. Paper, photocopy print, flax paper, clay pigment, flax, polyester thread, tracing paper, and cotton muslin, dimensions variable. On view in *Paemanu: Tauraka Toi*, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand, December 11, 2021 to April 25, 2022. Courtesy of the artist, Paemanu Charitable Trust, and Dunedin Public Art Gallery

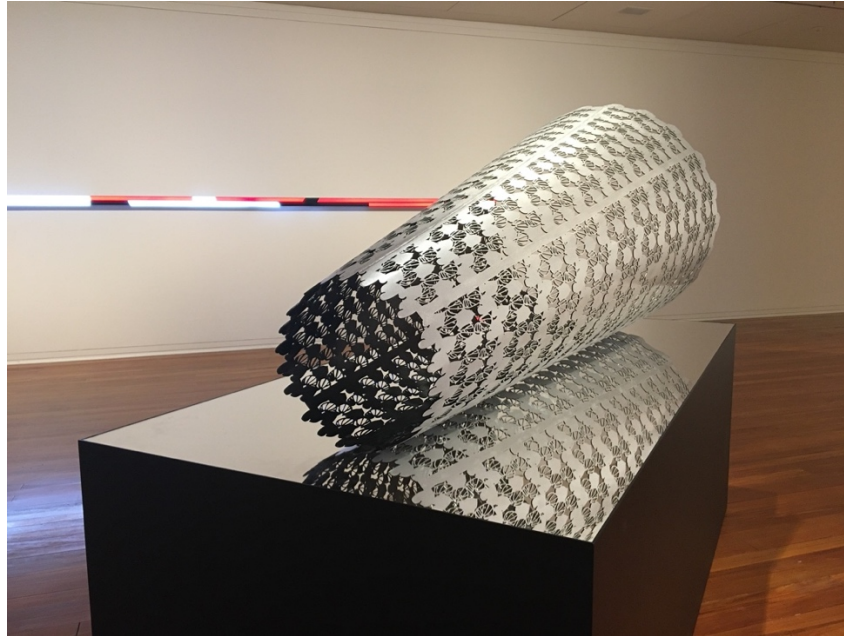


Figure 13. Foreground: Lonnie Hutchinson (Kāi Tahu, Kāti Kurī), *Becoming Sound*, 2021. Laser-cut and powder-coated aluminium, 800mm x 800 x 2000 mm. Background: Nathan Pōhio (Waitaha, Kāti Māmoe, Kāi Tahu, Ngāi Tūāhuriri), *Te Māku and Māhoranuiātea / The Mist and the Horizon*, 2021. Aluminium section, lead, acrylic, 210 x 8000 x 70 mm. On view in *Paemanu: Tauraka Toi*, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand, December 11, 2021 to April 25, 2022. Courtesy of the artists, Paemanu Charitable Trust, and Dunedin Public Art Gallery



Figure 14. Simon Kaan (Kāi Tahu, Kāti Irakehu, Kāti Mako), *Whakaruku* (detail), 2021. Digital photograph on cotton paper, ceramic waka, dimensions variable. On view in *Paemanu: Tauraka Toi*, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand, December 11, 2021 to April 25, 2022. Courtesy of the artist, Paemanu Charitable Trust, and Dunedin Public Art Gallery



Figure 15. Megan Brady (Kāi Tahu), *It rains, and we swim*, 2021. Memory foam, dimensions variable. On view in *Paemanu: Tauraka Toi*, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand, December 11, 2021 to April 25, 2022. Courtesy of the artist, Paemanu Charitable Trust, and Dunedin Public Art Gallery



Figure 16. Jennifer Katarina Rendall (Kāi Tahu, Orkney Island, European, Kāti Kūri, Kāti Waewae, Kāti Rakiāmoa), (left) *Te Moemoeā ā Māmā Rīwai*, 2021, 1615 x 1555 mm and (right) *Te Nehenehe Kahurangi (The Blue Forest)*, 2020. Acrylic, fabric paint, furnishing fabric, 2290 x 1555 mm. On view in *Paemanu: Tauraka Toi*, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand, December 11, 2021 to April 25, 2022. Courtesy of the artist, Paemanu Charitable Trust, and Dunedin Public Art Gallery



Figure 17. Paulette Tamati-Elliffe (Kāi Te Pahi, Kāi Te Ruahikihiki [Ōtākou], Te Ātiawa, Ngāti Mungua) and *whanau*, Komene Cassidy (Ngāpuhi, Ngāi Takoto), Rachael Rakena (Kāi Tahu, Ngāpuhi), Michael Bridgman (Tonga, Ngāti Pākehā), Laughton Kora (Ngāi Tūhoe, Ngāti Pūkeko, Ngāti Awa), Iain Frengley (Ngāti Pākehā), Ross Hemera (Waitaha, Ngāti Māmoē, Kāi Tahu), Mara TK (Kāi Tahu, Ngāti Kahungunu, Tainui), Amber Bridgman (Kāi Tahu, Kāti Māmoē, Waitaha, Rabuvai), and He Waka Kōtuaia, *Ko te Wai, He Wai Ora* (detail), 2021. Sixteen-channel video installation, dimensions variable. On view in *Paemanu: Tauraka Toi*, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand, December 11, 2021 to April 25, 2022. Courtesy of the artists, Paemanu Charitable Trust, and Dunedin Public Art Gallery



Figure 18. Installation view in *Paemanu: Tauraka Toi*, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand, December 11, 2021 to April 25, 2022. Artworks shown by Martin Awa Clarke Langdon (Kāi Tahu, Waikato-Tainui, Ngāti Hikairo, Ngāti Whawhākia), Kate Stevens West (Kāi Tahu), and Caitlin Donnelly (Kāi Tahu, Pākehā). Courtesy of the artists, Paemanu Charitable Trust, and Dunedin Public Art Gallery



Figure 19. Left: Madison Kelly (Kāi Tahu, Kāti Mamoe) and Mya Morrison-Middleton (Kāi Tahu, Ngāi Tūāhuriri), *Tūtakitaka*, 2021. *Tohorā rara* (whale rib, found near Waiputai), milled *harakeke* fibre, *whītau* (Makaweroa, Ruapani, no. 88), glass beads, *tōtara*, feathers, sea glass, two-channel audio track; Right: Ephraim Russell (Kāi Tahu, Ngāti Kahungunu, Rongomaiwāhine, Rongowhakaata, Te Aitanga-a-Māhaki, Ngāi Tāmanuhiri, Rangitāne ki Tāmaki Nui a Rua), *Taki Apakura (Lament)*, 2021. Mixed media, 2300 x 540 x 100 mm. On view in *Paemanu: Tauraka Toi*, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand, December 11, 2021 to April 25, 2022. Courtesy of the artists, Paemanu Charitable Trust, and Dunedin Public Art Gallery



Figure 20. Ayesha Green (Kāi Tāhu, Ngāti Kahungunu) and Kāi Tahu *whanau*, *Tūpuna Portraits*, 2021. Acrylic on plywood, dimensions variable. On view in *Paemanu: Tauraka Toi*, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand, December 11, 2021 to April 25, 2022. Courtesy of the artists, Paemanu Charitable Trust, and Dunedin Public Art Gallery



Figure 21. Public program of *tūpuna* (ancestor) portrait-making, Ōtakou Marae, January 29, 2022, in conjunction with the exhibition *Paemanu: Tauraka Toi*, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand, December 11, 2021, to April 25, 2022. Courtesy of Kāi Tahu *whanau* and Paemanu Charitable Trust



Figure 22. Simon Kean of Kaihaukai setting out *kai* (food) including customary fare for the *Paemanu: Tauraka Toi* opening event, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand, December 11, 2021. Courtesy of Paemanu Charitable Trust and Dunedin Public Art Gallery



Figure 23. Te Pou Herenga, drop-in weaving wānaka (workshop) led by local multimedia artist Amber Bridgman (Kāi Tahu) during the opening weekend of *Paemanu: Tauraka Toi*, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand, December 11, 2021. Courtesy of Paemanu Charitable Trust and Dunedin Public Art Gallery



Figure 24. Zoe Hall (Kāi Tahu), *Bloodline*, 2022. Acrylic, mural installation view. *Paemanu: Tauraka Toi*, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand, December 11, 2021 to April 25, 2022. Courtesy of the artist, Paemanu Charitable Trust, and Dunedin Public Art Gallery

Paemanu: Ngāi Tahu Contemporary Visual Arts would like to thank all of its contributors and supporters. We acknowledge the staff of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery, who have been exceptional project partners and generous hosts, sharing knowledge and developing relationships that have created new routes and approaches forward. Paemanu has made good anchorage there with our *waka* (water craft) full of treasured artworks. We will depart and return often to our *tauraka* (anchorage) at DPAG, provided this new landing place continues to be a safe haven in which to cultivate a vibrant Kāi Tahu visual culture for future generations.

Areta Wilkinson has developed a significant art practice over twenty-seven years that investigates the intersection of applied art (contemporary jewelry) as a form of knowledge and practice with Māori philosophies, especially whakapapa, an interconnected worldview informed by Kāi Tahu tribal perspectives. Wilkson received a PhD in creative arts through Te Pūtahi-ā-Toi School of Māori Art Knowledge and Education at Massey University. She was the recipient of the Creative New Zealand Craft Object Fellowship (2015) and exhibited at APT9 (2019) at the Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art. In 2022, she was awarded the Arts Foundation Laureate Jillian Friedlander Te Moananui-a-Kiwa award for an outstanding Māori/Pasifika artist.

Paemanu: Ngāi Tahu Contemporary Visual Arts was formed in 2013 by a group of Kāi Tahu contemporary visual art professionals dedicated to advancing Kāi Tahu visual culture through creative and innovative artistic expression. Wilkinson has been a trustee since its establishment (www.paemanu.org.nz).

Notes

¹ The word *paemanu* translates as “the perch of the birds.” It also means “collar bone” or “canoe thwart,” both fundamental support structures. With respect to the artist group, the notion is of a perch where *manu* (birds) find sanctuary and sustenance or, conversely, the platform from which they launch. Paemanu draws its creative spirit from the imagery found in ancestral rock paintings, particularly that of a bird with smaller birds perched on its wingspan drawn on limestone in the Waitaki Valley.

Kāi Tahu are an Indigenous tribal group of Te Waipounamu, the South Island of Aotearoa New Zealand. Paemanu generates projects to achieve the collective’s mission “to cultivate a vibrant Kāi Tahu visual culture for future generations by exploring Kāi Tahutaka (Kāi Tahu identity) through contemporary visual arts.”

More information is available on the group's website: <https://www.paemanu.co.nz/>.

² The Dunedin Public Art Gallery (<https://dunedin.art.museum>) is currently under the directorship of Cam McCracken. Its current curatorial staff includes Lucy Hammond, Tim Pollock, and Lauren Gutsell. Paemanu is gathered under the legal entity of Paemanu Charitable Trust, which was established in 2013. The trustees are Ross Hemera, Kiri Jarden, Simon Kaan, Martin Langdon, Nathan Pohio, Rachael Rakena, Rongomaiaia Te Whaiti, and Areta Wilkinson. The Paemanu curatorial artists leading *Tauraka Toi* are Ayesha Green, Ross Hemera, Lonnie Hutchinson, Kiri Jarden, Simon Kaan, Martin Langdon, Vicki Lenihan, Peter Robinson, Nathan Pohio, Rachael Rakena, Rongomaiaia Te Whaiti, and Areta Wilkinson. The Paemanu project manager is Natalie Jones.

³ A two-minute video of the ceremony is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xCukqKseLc8>.

⁴ For more about the principles of *kaupapa* Māori, see <http://www.rangahau.co.nz/research-idea/27/>.