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Cover Image. Top: Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck, *M.A.P.S.*, 2020. Acrylic and spray paint on wood board; 1600 x 2000 mm. Bottom: Sopolamalama Filipe Tohi, *Talanoafolau*, 2020. Andesite, wood, and sennit; 350 x 770 x 360 mm. *'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures* exhibition, Te Whare Toi o Heretaunga Hastings Art Gallery, 2023. Photograph courtesy of Te Whare Toi o Heretaunga. Photograph by Thomas Teutenberg

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LORD VAEA OF HOUMA

Foreword: ‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures— Back to the Future

Abstract

A short introduction to the ‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures project, presented in both English and Tongan, by the Honorable Lord Vaea, ‘Alipate Tu‘ivanuavou Vaea of Houma.

Keywords: *Tonga, ‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures, art, visual culture, material culture, Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck, Sopoalemalama Filipe Tohi*

‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures honors our treasured memories, maintaining and preserving traditional oral knowledge and inspiring tomorrow’s successes. Our cultural memories are stored orally, written, and performed, but also carved, woven, and displayed in museums and art galleries in another dimension. So, it is ever more vital that projects such as ‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a cast a spectrum of light on the artifacts for our future generations.

The “Ancient Futures” theme emphasizes Tongan arts acquired through exchanges, purchases, and gifts all held overseas as artifacts of exploration. The significant and detailed scientific accounts began when items were drawn, measured, packed, and stored by expedition savants. Now, museums preserve, observe, and protect these foreign cultural artifacts for generations to view, while the written accounts of the artifacts remain the adopted cornerstone for researchers and cultural historians. The Tongan diaspora employs our traditional artifacts, noting their spectacular ingenuity and using the format of modern art, absorbing new creative ideas, foreign symbolism, perception, and interpretive variance for a new, diasporic Tongan art form.

When visited by our practitioners, Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck and Sopoalemalama Filipe Tohi, the dimensions changed and it all became reinvigorated. Ancient Futures illuminates and recasts the original artifacts, and the subsequently added new artifacts are spectacular. For instance, Sopoalemalama Filipe Tohi’s paintings of war clubs have an urban-looking background, and Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck’s paint-textured weavings present

opportunities for new interpretations in altogether new dimensions. Dyck and Tohi are to be commended for their explorations and inspiration. It is they who help motivate Tongans to imagine our pasts and create our futures.

Talamu'aki: 'Amui 'i Mu'a

'Oku 'omai 'e he 'Amui 'i Mu'a/*Ancient Futures* 'a e manatu melie ki he kuohilí koe'uhí ko hono fakatolonga 'a hotau tukufakaholó pea hoko ko e fakalotolahi ki he lavame'a 'o e kaha'ú. Ko 'etau ngaahi 'ilo fakafonuá 'oku tauhi ia 'i hono hikitoi. 'Oku 'i he 'etau ngaahi faiva fakafonuá. 'Oku vahevahe meí he to'utangata ki he to'utangata pea 'oku tā tongitongi pe lalanga 'o faka'ali'ali atu 'i he ngaahi misiumé 'i ha ngaahi fōtungā kehe. 'Oku mahu'inga 'aupito ke fakahoko ha ngāue hangē 'oku fakahoko 'e he 'Amui 'i Mu'a ki hono fakamā'opo'opo 'o e ngaahi koloa fakamea'a ki he to'utangata 'o e kaha'ú.

'Oku fakataumu'a 'a e ngāue 'a e *Ancient Futures* ki he ngaahi koloa fakamea'a Tonga kuo tauhi meí he ngaahi fakafetongi koloa, fefakatau'aki koloa pe ko e ma'u ko e me'a'ofa 'a ia 'oku faka'ali'ali atu 'i he ngaahi fonua mulí. Na'e kamata 'a hono hikitoi 'o e ngaahi fakamatata fekau'aki mo e ngaahi koloá talu meí he taimi na'e mavahe ai mei Tongá ni 'a kinautolu na'a nau 'ave 'a e ngaahi koloá. Kuo tauhi mo fakatolonga 'a e koloá ni 'e he ngaahi misiume 'i he opé ke mātā 'e he ngaahi to'utangatá pea hoko leva 'a e ngaahi fakamatata hikitoi ko e makatu'unga'anga ki he ngāue 'a e kau fakatotoló mo e kau tohihisitōlia fakafonuá. Kuo ngāue'aki 'etau ngaahi koloa fakamea'a 'i he ngaahi fonua mulí koe'uhí ko e ngaahi pōto'i ngāue makehe na'e fakahoko'aki fakataha mo e ngaahi founga ngāue fakaonopōnī ke ma'u ha ngaahi founga fo'ou, ngaahi 'ata fo'ou mo ha fakakaukau fo'ou ki he ngaahi ngāue faka'aati Tongá.

'I he 'a'ahi mai 'a Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck mo Sopolemalama Filipe Tohi, na'e kehe 'a e fōtungā 'o e ngaahi ngāue fakamea'a 'i he'ene hā fo'ou mo faka'ofa'ofá. Kuo toe fakafoki mai 'e he *Ancient Futures* 'a e founga ngāue fakamea'a 'o e kuohilí, 'a ia 'oku hā makehe mo faka'ofa'ofa eni 'i he'ena ngaahi ngāue ki muí ni maí. 'Oku kau 'i heni 'a hono tā valivali 'e Sopolemalama Filipe Tohi 'a e ngaahi pōvai 'o ngāue'aki ha ngaahi founga fo'ou pea tā 'e Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck ha ngaahi lālanga 'i ha fotunga fo'ou. 'Oku hounga 'aupito 'a e ngāue fisifisimu'a 'a Tohi mo Dyck 'i hono fakamā'opo'opo 'o e ngaahi koloá mo e fakalotolahi ki he kaha'ú 'o e fonuá. Kuó na lava ke tokoni ke fakafoki 'etau manatú ki he kuohilí ko e sio ki he kaha'ú.

Translation by Alioth Helu

The Honorable Lord Vaea, 'Alipate Tu'ivanuavou Vaea of Houma, is a member of the Tongan nobility. He was installed as Lord Vaea in 2009, upon the death of his father, Baron 'Alipate Vaea Tupou. He entered Tongan politics in 2010 as a noble's representative for the island of Tongatapu. Lord Vaea has long been interested in Tonga's past. He served as the Tongan Royal Palace archivist, as well as the chairman of the Tongan Traditions Committee. Lord Vaea is currently minister of internal affairs.

PHYLLIS HERDA and BILLIE LYTHBERG

‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures: Late Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century Tongan Arts and Their Legacies

Abstract

This essay introduces the two issues of Pacific Arts dedicated to the New Zealand-based, Marsden Fund (Royal Society of New Zealand)-financed research project ‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures: Late Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century Tongan Arts and Their Legacies and its affiliated traveling exhibition. The project’s participants included Phyllis Herda (anthropologist and Pacific historian), Billie Lythberg (art historian, anthropologist, and now lecturer in organizational studies), Melenaite Taumoefolau (Pacific linguist and researcher in Pacific studies), Hilary Scothorn (art historian and Pacific textile specialist), and Tongan artists Sopolemalama Filipe Tohi and Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck. These academics and artists worked collaboratively to locate, examine, and interpret late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Tongan artifacts in more than thirty collections throughout Europe, the United Kingdom, the United States, Japan, and Australasia, as well as to investigate the legacies of Tongan–European encounters in this era.

Erratum notice: This article previously stated on page 7 “The second issue of *Pacific Arts* dedicated to this project (vol. 25, no. 2, forthcoming in 2025). . .” and was corrected on 1 October 2025 to state “The second, forthcoming issue of *Pacific Arts* dedicated to this project. . .”

Keywords: *‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures, Tonga, Tongan art, Tongan history, Pacific art*

The late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were a time of encounter between Indigenous Polynesian societies and European explorers who entered the Pacific. In Tonga, foreign visitors were met and entertained by the local elite of the islands, who presented them with lavish feasts and elaborate gift exchanges that included “art” and chiefly regalia. Through this feasting and reciprocal exchange, hosts and visitors established relationships. When the voyagers left the islands, the items they took with them became vestiges of their encounters and

'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures, a project funded by the Royal Society of New Zealand Te Apārangi under a Marsden Grant, brought academics and artists together to locate, examine, and interpret late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Tongan arts ("Ancient") from these Tongan–European encounters and consider their legacies ("Futures"). Working collaboratively, project members and affiliates applied their research experience and knowledge to newly encountered Tongan artifacts in over thirty collections dispersed throughout Europe, the United Kingdom, the United States, Japan, and Australasia. Names, terminologies, construction techniques, and decorative practices were uncovered and reinstated and, in doing so, we learned more about the intentions of objects' makers, donors, and collectors. Our research on these items, estranged from their places within Tongan communities for nearly two centuries, was intended to elucidate Tongan knowledges, European and Tongan history-making, and agency in Tongans' early engagements with Europeans. Gifting and reciprocal exchanges in traditional Tongan society were far from being simple transactions; they involved multifaceted performances of the status, power, and *hohoko* (genealogy) of the giver, receiver, *and* the object. A social relationship, manifested in the object, was formed through the presentation of the gift, which endured long after the exchange event.

The 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures team included Phyllis Herda (anthropologist and Pacific historian), Billie Lythberg (art historian, anthropologist, museum studies scholar, and now lecturer in organizational studies), Melenaite Taumoefolau (linguist and Pacific studies scholar), and Hilary Scothorn (art historian and Pacific textile specialist), as well as senior Tongan artists Sopolamalama Filipe Tohi and Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck. The team was joined at museums and venues by international colleagues, knowledgeable and supportive curators of collections, and, where possible, experts in traditional Indigenous knowledge.

Two special issues of *Pacific Arts*—this issue and a forthcoming one—are dedicated to presenting the project's research results. Our research pivoted around close examination of the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Tongan arts objects we encountered and the records made of them—ranging from Indigenous oral histories and traditions to descriptions written by foreigners in manuscripts to old and obscure publications. We made an effort to reinstate the artifacts' genealogies and intrinsic cultural and historical values, as well as develop a new conceptual framework for their consideration. We looked for continuity between these ancient artifacts and contemporary practices, as well as innovation in the arts of Tongan ancestors and their descendants, and sought to reclaim and

repatriate the knowledge systems encoded in objects that are woven, layered, wrapped, and carved.

This issue of *Pacific Arts* highlights the artistic contribution of Sopolemalama Filipe Tohi and Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck, core project members and senior Tongan artists who convey the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Tongan art practices they encountered in museums through their work in new media. It also presents the 'Amui 'i Mu'a/*Ancient Futures* exhibition, held first in the Tongan capital of Nuku'alofa (2019), and then in Auckland (2021) and Hastings (2023), Aotearoa New Zealand. Each hosting venue held a week of events connected to the exhibition, which included a public symposium supported variously by Creative New Zealand, the New Zealand High Commission in Tonga, the Tanoa Dateline Hotel, the Marsden Fund through the 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures project, the Wörlitz Foundation, and the Ancient Tonga Museum.

The week of activities in Nuku'alofa launched with an exhibition of artworks made by Tohi and Dyck, as well as one featuring work by young Tongan artists. In Auckland, the Wallace Arts Centre at the Pah Homestead also held an exhibition of artworks by Tohi and Dyck, including historic Tongan artifacts from the Canterbury Museum in Christchurch and the Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira. In Hastings, the Hastings City Art Gallery (HCAG) Te Whare Toi o Heretaunga featured historic artifacts from the collection of the Hawke's Bay Museums Trust, along with Dyck and Tohi's artwork. Each week of events also included public lectures, *talanoa* (discussion), and workshops. These events were well attended by both the public and local Tongan community members, and generated rich discussion. These events—presenting the interpretation and interlocation of past, present, and future—were inspired windows to the past and creative legacies for the future.

Thanks to Rim Books' publisher and owner (and renowned photographer) Haru Sameshima, this issue includes the original catalogue essays done for the Pah Homestead exhibition, which were published in 2021 as a beautifully printed book.¹ We are grateful to photographer and academic Raymond Sagapolutele, who took many of the photographs initially published there and now republished here, and to other photographers where named. We are grateful to *Art New Zealand* for allowing us to republish Hatesa Seumanutafa's review of the exhibition.² Billie Lythberg's report on the conference was first published in *Museum Worlds*.³ Several key essays are published in both lea faka-Tonga, translated by Alioth Helu, as well as in English, and the texts reproduced from HCAG include translations into te reo Māori by Te Ara Ripeka-Rangihuna (Ngāti Porou, Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngāti Tūwharetoa). New articles have also been

Museum Worlds.³ Several key essays are published in both lea faka-Tonga, translated by Alioth Helu, as well as in English, and the texts reproduced from HCAG include translations into te reo Māori by Te Ara Ripeka-Rangihuna (Ngāti Porou, Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngāti Tūwharetoa). New articles have also been prepared for this special issue to extend its coverage of the *Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures* exhibitions and their public outreach activities.

The second, forthcoming issue of *Pacific Arts* dedicated to this project lays out the aims and praxis of the 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures project, and introduces the museums and institutions visited by the research team, as well as the nature of their traditional Tongan collections. We explore the genealogies of artifacts that have been estranged from their original places within Tongan communities for nearly two centuries, tracing their paths from when they left the Tongan archipelago with European visitors to their acquisition by foreign museums. We investigate the agency of Tongans in their early engagements with Europeans, and elucidate Tongan knowledges, as well as European and Tongan history-making, through the mobilization of the art objects that changed hands between them. Central to this investigation is the identification of the Tongan individuals who met and hosted the European visitors. Tongan *hohoko*, Tongan oral traditions, and European accounts of the encounters directed us in our analysis. While Europeans' descriptions of Tongan history and culture, and the identification of the elite individuals they met, were certainly not flawless in their understanding, they do provide a contemporary, yet imperfect, picture of the encounters between Tongans and Europeans. Contextualizing these descriptions with the informative Tongan *hohoko* and oral traditions produced a much more informed understanding of the individuals involved.

The 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures team also explores traditional Tongan society, politics, language, and religion, with a special emphasis on art objects and the Tongan gift economy. Tangible aspects of Tongan *koloa tukufakaholo* (cultural heritage), such as the objects gifted to Europeans in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, become Indigenous cultural artifacts ripe with meanings significant to their time. We establish the traditional contexts of their manufacture and investigate the social messages they encapsulate in their form, fabrication, accumulation, and presentation to foreigners. We consider offered and collected ancient Tongan artifacts including divine and chiefly objects, body marking, fiber arts, adornments, carving, and tools of the land and the sea. The two special issues of *Pacific Arts* present two aspects of the research project. Project members and affiliates offer salient analyses of Tongan art and artifacts and their legacies in

both historic and contemporary contexts as well as insights of the complexities of investigating historical Tongan–European encounters.

Phyllis Herda works across the disciplines of anthropology, Pacific history, and women's/gender studies. She holds degrees from the University of Arizona (BA, anthropology), the Waipapa Taumata Rau | University of Auckland (MA, 1st class, anthropology) and Australian National University (PhD, Pacific history). She began working in Tonga in the early 1980s and continues to research, publish, and teach on topics such as Tongan ethnography, oral tradition, and history; European explorers in Polynesia; gender; disease; colonialism; and Polynesia art and material culture, including traditional and contemporary textiles. She has taught at Victoria University of Wellington and the Waipapa Taumata Rau | University of Auckland, from which she recently retired.

Billie Lythberg is of Swedish, Scottish, and English descent. She is a senior lecturer in the Department of Management and International Business at Waipapa Taumata Rau | University of Auckland, and an affiliated researcher of Vā Moana–Pacific Spaces at Te Wānanga Aronui o Tāmaki Makau Rau | Auckland University of Technology. She has worked with Māori and Moana colleagues on multiple projects for the Royal Society of New Zealand, including the Marsden-funded 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures project. She publishes extensively, curates and critiques exhibitions, and develops documentaries for broadcast television.

Notes

¹ Billie Lythberg, ed., *'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures: Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck, Sopoalemalama Filipe Tohi* (Auckland: Rim Books, 2021). The hardcopy catalogue of *'Amui 'i Mu'a* (ISBN 978-0-9951194-5-4) is available for purchase by contacting the artists on social media.

² Hatesa Seuma Utafa, "Ngatu Led Me North: Reflections on 'Amui 'i Mu'a—Ancient Futures," *Art New Zealand* 179 (Spring 2021): 88–92.

³ Billie Lythberg, "'Amui 'i Mu'a: Ancient Futures Conference, Tanoa International Dateline Hotel, Tonga, 7–12 October 2019," *Museum Worlds* 7, no. 1 (2019), 236–7.

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**BILLIE LYTHBERG, PHYLLIS HERDA,
and MELENAITE TAUMOEFOLAU**

'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures in Context

Abstract

This article introduces, in English and Tongan, the volume of Pacific Arts devoted to the project titled 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures, which included a 2021 exhibition of the same name featuring artworks by Sopolemalama Filipe Tohi and Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck. It also includes biographical sketches of Tohi and Dyck.

Keywords: *'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures, Tongan art, Pacific art, Sopolemalama Filipe Tohi, Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck, Tongan diaspora, art, material culture, printmaking*

In the exhibition series *'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures*, senior Tongan artists Sopolemalama Filipe Tohi and Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck bring renewed understandings of how the traditions of millennia of Tongan artists relate to their own praxes. Together, Tohi and Dyck convey late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Tongan art practices to new media and new audiences. In the exhibitions, the interlocation of past, present, and future Tongan arts is offered in glorious empathy to inspire feeling of *māfana*, unrestrained “warmth of heart” or emotion—a particularly Tongan feeling evoked powerfully by the direct experience of *nima mea'a*, or Tongan arts.

The exhibitions, supported by Creative New Zealand, are the artistic culmination of a Marsden project funded by the Royal Society of New Zealand. Tohi and Dyck were the artist-scholars on *Ancient Futures: Late Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century Tongan Arts and Their Legacies*, working with us (art historian and anthropologist Billie Lythberg, historian and anthropologist Phyllis Herda, and linguist Melenaite Taumoefolau—all based at the University of Auckland) as well as art historian Hilary L. Scothorn and international colleagues. Over five years, the team examined art objects of exchange and encounter between Europeans and Tongans in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, now held in museum collections worldwide. We looked for continuity within contemporary practices and innovation in the arts of Tongan ancestors and their descendants

and sought to reclaim and repatriate to Tonga and its diaspora the knowledge systems encoded in woven, layered, wrapped, and carved objects. The Ancient Futures team visited more than thirty collections in the United Kingdom, United States, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, France, Italy, Sweden, Japan, Australia, and Aotearoa.

Central to the aims and praxis of the project was bringing together our different knowledge bases and providing opportunities for the interpretation of ancient items in contemporary works as creative legacies for the future. Together in the storerooms, our senses were heightened. In some collections, Tohi and Dyck alone had the option not to wear gloves. For many of the artifacts they handled, theirs were the first Tongan hands to warm them in 250 years.

We learned from each other, often collapsing disciplinary boundaries and always adhering to the values on which the project was founded, including *faka'apa'apa*—respect for each other's observations and speculations as well as for the objects themselves. The synergy of working in the museum stores as a team proved, as we had hoped, both exciting and enlightening; the sum total of shared "table talk" was much more than our individual knowledge and expertise. The opinions and insights of artists and academics alike added to the often sparsely written details associated with each object by each institution, and their various intersections and divergences were both unpredictable and highly generative.

Sopolemalama Filipe Tohi was born in Ngele'ia on Tongatapu, Tonga's main island. He immigrated to Aotearoa in 1978. For *'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures*, Tohi extended his lifelong examination of traditional Tongan *lalava* lashing patterns as well as the finely incised carving of late eighteenth-century Tongan clubs to uncover what he refers to as a "fiber system" of knowledge, with rules, orders, and schema. He has also analyzed eighteenth-century *kali* headrests, recovering the method of their construction as well as the relationships between their dimensions that encode sophisticated mathematical logic. Tohi's new works draw out the repeating motifs and ways of knowing that he has seen in these objects and reveal profound connections to navigation practices. The most literal of these, an installation of paintings of the moon, is based on his taking a photo of the moon every night throughout our travels as an enduring navigational aid—the same moon looked at by Tongan navigators and European explorers.

Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck is a Tongan-German multimedia artist. She was born and raised in Auckland where she continues to live, practice art, and teach. Dyck's mother is German-Tongan from Vava'u and her father is German, Polish, and Dutch. In the 1980s, Dyck and her family lived for a year in Vava'u. Over the next

two decades, they spent most summer holidays in Vava'u, keeping connections with the village and family strong. Dyck attended the Elam School of Fine Arts at the University of Auckland and in 1995 was the first woman of Tongan ancestry to obtain a postgraduate diploma in fine art. She also holds a graduate diploma in teaching (2009) and recently completed her MA in professional studies, education.

Known for her dynamic prints and paintings that often draw from the *kupesi* (designs) on *ngatu* (barkcloth), Dyck has drawn new, significant inspiration from the garments worn by her ancestors. Dyck has continued her exploration of *ngatu* motifs and closely woven *kato alu* (ceremonial baskets) and *kato mosi kaka* (finely woven coconut fiber baskets), as well as elaborately feathered *sisi fale* (waist garments), *kiekie* (waist adornments), *fala* (mats), and *helu* (combs). Her works explicate these in woven, painted, and layered formats. With her skillfulness in printmaking, Dyck also created a series of limited-edition screen prints intricately layered with historical and contemporary references. Directly acknowledging the communal making of many Tongan women's arts, she led the creation of a multimedia installation with her sister, Luana Dyck, and photo-filmic artists and sisters Emily and Ve'a Mafile'o.

Another significant achievement was introducing Tohi to the complex and sophisticated screen-printing process and the possibilities this media presents for his practice. Dyck brought Tohi to the experts at Artrite Screenprinting in Auckland and worked together with its printmaking artisans to produce limited-edition prints that commemorate their participation in the Ancient Futures project. These contemporary works, made for the gallery context, were complemented by and exhibited in conversation with a selection of historical Tongan artifacts from both public and private collections.

Talateu: 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures in Context

Kuo fakahoko 'e he ongo taukei Tonga 'i he mala'e 'o e 'atí mo e ngaahi ngāue fakamea'á, Sopolemalama Filipe Tohi mo Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck, 'a hono toe ngāue'aki 'a e ngaahi founga ngāue tukufakaholo lauita'u mei he kuohilí 'i he'ena ngaahi ngāue. Ko 'ena ngāue fakataha 'eni lolotonga 'a e polokalama ngāue 'oku 'iloa ko e 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures. Kuo ngāue fakataha 'a Tohi mo Dyck ke vahevahe atu 'a e ngaahi ngāue 'a e kāinga Tonga meí he kongā ki mui 'o e senituli 18 ki he kongā ki mu'a 'o e senituli 19 mo ha taha pē 'oku manako pe muimui'i 'a e ngaahi koloá ni. 'E kau mai ki he katoanga faka'alí'alí 'a e ngaahi ngāue faka'aati

mo fakamea'a Tonga mei he kuohilí mo e lolotongá ni ke hoko ko e fakalotolahi mo e fakamāfana ki he kau ngāue faka'aati mo e nima mea'a 'o e kaha'ú.

Kuo tokoni mai 'a e *Creative New Zealand* ki hono fakahoko 'a e polokalama ngāué pea fakapa'anga 'e he *Marsden project, Royal Society of New Zealand*. Ko Dyck mo Tohi ko e ongo taukei 'i he 'ēlia 'o e 'ātí mo e ngaahi ngāue fakamea'a pea 'okú na kau ki he timi ngāue fakatotolo 'oku 'iloa ko e *Ancient Futures: Late 18th and Early 19th Century Tongan Arts and their Legacies (Ngaahi ngāue faka'aati mo e koloa fakamea'a Tonga mei he kongá ki mui 'o e senituli 18 mo e kongá ki mu'a 'o e senituli 19)*. Na'e kau ki he ngāue ko 'ení 'a Dr Phyllis Herda, Dr Melenaita Taumoefolau mo Dr Billie Lythberg mei he *University of Auckland* pea mo ha tokotaha mataotao ko Hilary L. Scothorn. 'I he ta'u 'e nima kuo hilí, na'e lava ke fai hono vakai'i tonu 'a e ngaahi koloa fakamea'a Tonga mei he ngaahi fakafetongi koloa 'a e Tongá mo e kau papālangí mei he kongá ki mui 'o e senituli 18 mo e kongá ki mu'a 'o e senituli 19. 'Oku tauhi 'a e ngaahi koloá ni 'i he misiume 'o e ngaahi fonua muli. Ko 'emau feingá ke fakatolonga 'a e ngaahi ngāue tukufakaholo ko 'ení ke tokoni 'i hono fofoa'i ha ngaahi founga fo'ou meiate kinautolu 'o e kuohilí. 'Oku fakahoko mo e ngāue ke fakafoki ki Tonga pea mo vahevahe 'a e ngaahi tukufakaholó ni mo e kāinga Tonga 'i he ngaahi fonua mulí. Na'e a'u tonu 'a e timi ngāue 'a e *Ancient Futures* ki ha ngaahi feitu'u kehekehe 'e 30 tupu 'i Pilitānia, 'Amelika, Siamane, 'Ositulia, Siusalani, Falanisē, 'Itali, Sueteni, Siapani, 'Aositelēlia mo Nu'u Silá ni, 'a ia 'oku tauhi ai 'a e ngaahi koloa fakamea'a.

Na'e fakataumu'a 'a e ngāué, ke fakatahataha'i 'a e ngaahi taukei mo e a'usia 'oku nau ma'ú, ke fakamā'opo'opo 'a e ngaahi ngāue 'o e kuohilí ko e sio ki he kaha'ú. Na'e ma'ú faingamālie 'a Tohi mo Dyck ke na hoko ko e ongo fuofua Tonga ke sio mo ala ki he ngaahi ngāue 'o e 'aneafí 'a ia kuo tauhi mai eni 'i ha ta'u 'e 250. Kuo lava ai ke ma'ú 'a e ngaahi hingoa, fakamatala, founga ngāue mo e teuteu fakasanisani 'o 'enua ngāué 'o lava ke mahino ai 'a e taumu'a 'a e tokotaha na'á ne ngaohí, tokotaha na'á ne foakí mo e tokotaha na'á ne tauhí.

'Oku tau fevahevahe'aki 'o ako ai 'a e ngaahi me'a lahi mo nofo taha ki he taumu'a 'o e polokalama ngaué. 'Oku kau heni 'a e faka'apa'apa'i 'a e ngaahi tñaki mai 'a e taha kotoa ki he ngāué. Kuo mahino 'a e ola lelei mo fakafiefia ange 'a e ngāue fakatahá 'i he ngāue fakataautahá. Na'e kau foki 'a e taukei 'a e kau 'ātí fakataha mo kinautolu 'i he mala'e 'o e akó ki hono fakamahino mo vahevahe mai 'a e ngaahi fakamatala na'e tō kehekehe ai 'a e ni'ihí fekau'aki mo e ngaahi koloa kuo tauhí.

Na'e fa'ēle'i 'a Sopolemalama Filipe Tohi 'i Ngele'ia, Tongatapu, Tonga. Na'á ne hiki mai ki Nu'u Silá ni 'i he 1978. 'I he'ene ngāue mo e 'Amui 'i Mu'a: *Ancient Futures*, kuo toe hokohoko atu ai 'ene vīšione ta'u lahi ki he ngāue faka'ātí

'o kau ai 'a e lalavá mo e tā tongitongi 'o e pōvai Tongá fakatatau ki he ngaahi ngāue 'o e kongá ki mui 'o e senituli 18. Ko hono toe fakamo'ui eni 'a e *'fibre system'* pe tukufakaholo 'o e 'iló mo e founga ngāue na'e fakahoko'aki 'a e ngaahi ngāue fakamea'á. Na'á ne toe vakai'i mo ngāue ki he ngaahi kali mei he senituli 18 'o mahino 'a e anga mo e founga hono ngaohi pea mo e 'ilo fakafika fekau'aki mo e ngaahi fua 'o e lahi 'o e ngaahi kalí. Kuo kamata ngāue eni 'a Tohi ki he ngaahi tongi pe kupesi na'e ngāue'aki 'i he ngaahi ngāue fakamea'á 'o 'ilo'i ai 'a 'ene felāve'i mo e folau tahí. Na'e kau ki he ngāue'á 'a 'ene tā valivali 'o e māhiná fakata-tau ki he ngaahi 'ata na'á ne faitaa'i he pō kotoa lolotonga 'emau fefolau'akí hangē ha me'a faifolau na'e ngāue'aki 'e he kāinga Tonga 'o ono'ahó pe kau papālangi na'a nau kumi fonua fo'ou.

Ko Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck ko ha tokotaha Tonga/ Siamane taukei 'i he ngāue faka'atí. Na'e fā'ēle'i pea tupu hake 'a Dyck'i 'Aokalani, Nu'u Sila. 'Okú ne kei nofo mo hoko atu 'ene ngāue'á mo faiako 'aati 'i 'Aokalaní ni. Ko e fine'eiki 'a Dyck, ko e Tonga/Siamane mei Vava'u pea ko 'ene tangata'eiki ko e Siamane mei Pōlani. 'I he 80 tupú, na'e nofo ai 'a Dyck mo hono fāmilí 'i Vava'u 'i ha ta'u 'e taha. Ko e ta'u eni 'e 20 mo 'ene folau ma'u pē 'o mālōlō ki Vava'u ke feohi ai mo e kāingá mo e ngaahi kolo kehé. Na'e ako 'a Dyck 'i he *Elam School of fine Arts* 'o e *University of Auckland* pea na'á ne hoko ko e fuofua fefine Tonga kuo ma'u 'a e mata'itohi ko e *postgraduate diploma of fine arts* 'i he 1995. 'Oku 'i ai foki hono mata'itohi *graduate diploma in teaching (2009)* pea ki muí ni 'a e mata'itohi *MA in professional studies, education*.

'Oku 'iloa 'a e ngaahi tā valivali 'a Dyck ki mui ní, na'e makatu'unga meí he ngaahi kupesi 'o e ngatú mo e vala hotau kāinga he kuo hilí. Kuó ne toe ngāue'aki foki 'a e ngaahi 'ilo mo e founga ngāue fakamea'a kehe 'o kau ai 'a e kato alú, kato mosikaká, sisi falé (teuteu'i'aki 'a e fulufulu'i manú), kiekié, falá mo e helú. Ko e ngaahi ngāue faka'aati eni kuo lālanga, tā valivali pea 'i ha ngaahi fōtunga kehe pē. Kuo lava ke paaki ai ha ngaahi 'ata 'o e ngāue'á ni 'o ngāue'aki 'a e ngaahi founga motu'a fakataha mo e ngaahi 'ilo fakaonopoó ni. Kuo ngāue fakataha 'a Dyck mo hono tokouá, Luana Dyck pea pehē foki ki he ongo tautehina ko Emily mo Veá Mafile'o, ko e ongo taukei 'i he ngāue faka'atí, ngāue'aki 'a e faitaa'á mo e filimí fakataha mo e ngaahi founga kehekehe 'o e mītiá (vitiō mo e 'ata). Kuo lava ke fa'u mo tauhi ha ngaahi lekooti ke fakamanatu'aki 'a e ngāue fakamea'a 'a e fefine Tongá.

Na'e kau foki 'a e ngaahi ngāue 'a Tohi 'i hono faitaa'i mo hiki vitioo'i 'o kau ai 'a 'ene ngaahi tā valivali fakaonopoó ni kuo paaki pea kuo tokoni ke tu'uaki 'aki 'ene ngāue'á ki he opé. Na'e fakafe'iloaki 'e Dyck'a Tohi ki he kau ngāue taukei 'o e fale paaki *Artrite Screen printing* pea kuo nau ngāue fakataha ki hono paaki

makehe 'o e ngaahi ngāue faka'ātí ke fakamanatu'aki 'ena kau ki he polokalama ngāue mo e *Ancient Futures*. 'Oku faka'ali'ali atu 'a e ngaahi ngāué ni fakataha mo e ngāue fakamea'a Tonga 'o e kuohilí.

Translation by Alioth Helu

Phyllis Herda's work crosses the traditional disciplines of anthropology, Pacific history, and women's/gender studies. She holds degrees from the University of Arizona (BA, anthropology), the University of Auckland (MA, first class, anthropology), and Australian National University (PhD, Pacific history). She has taught at Victoria University (Wellington) and the University of Auckland, from which she recently retired. She began working in Tonga in the early 1980s and continues to research, publish, and teach on topics including Tongan ethnography; European explorers in Polynesia; Polynesia art and material culture; Tongan oral tradition and history; gender, disease and colonialism; and traditional and contemporary Polynesian textiles.

Billie Lythberg is of Swedish, Scottish, and English descent. She is a senior lecturer in the Department of Management and International Business at Waipapa Taumata Rau|The University of Auckland, and an affiliated researcher of Vā Moana–Pacific Spaces at Te Wānanga Aronui o Tāmaki Makau Rau|Auckland University of Technology. She has worked on multiple projects for the Royal Society of New Zealand with Māori and Moana colleagues, including the Marsden Grant-funded project discussed in this volume. She publishes extensively in print and online, curates and critiques exhibitions, and develops documentaries for broadcast television.

Melenaite Taumoefolau was born to Tongan parents: the late Reverend Tēvita Tu'ipulotu Taumoefolau and Kakala. She attended primary and secondary schools in Tonga and attended the University of the South Pacific where she graduated with a BA in English and history and a concurrent certificate in education. She returned to Tonga and taught English at Tonga College and Tonga High School. She obtained an MA in English as a second/foreign language at the University of Wales. She became principal of Tonga College for a year before moving to New Zealand where she studied lexicography and linguistics at the University of Auckland, earning a PhD in linguistics and a masters of professional studies in translation (first class honors). Currently she is teaching and researching at the Centre for Pacific Studies, University of Auckland.

DAGMAR VAIKALAFI DYCK

‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures: An Artist Reflection

Abstract

The ‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures project afforded me, as one of its investigator-artists, a rare opportunity to authentically engage with ancestral objects held in museum collections across the globe. This article provides a brief history of my art practice, as well as insights into my critical sense-making process and subsequent creative outputs. My reflections highlight the importance of nurturing relationships with Indigenous communities, and underscore the critical roles of museum practitioners in caring for and sharing our Indigenous treasures. Despite challenges including intergenerational knowledge loss and institutional barriers, the project advocates for decolonizing and re-Indigenizing museum practices. The ‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures project exemplifies the power of authentic collaboration in preserving, honoring, and celebrating ancestral intelligence.

Keywords: ‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures, Tonga, Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck, Tongan art, contemporary art, museums, decolonizing museums, collections, koloa, Indigenous knowledge, identity

Laying Down My Roots: Positioning Myself in the Research

My ancestral roots on my father Dieter’s side extend from the lands of the Baltic Sea port of Danzig, Germany (now Gdansk, Poland). My mother Senikau’s Germanic bloodlines originate in Pyritz, Pomerania, and the northern islands of Vava‘u, Tonga, where she was born in the village of ‘Utungake. My great-grandfather, Wilhem Wolfgramm, or Vili ‘Utungake as he was known, was a boatbuilder, and he married my great-grandmother, ‘Ofa ki Vava‘u, from the village of Tu‘anuku. On their marriage certificate, my great-grandmother recorded her occupation as “*tutu*”—one who beats the *feta‘aki* (plain tapa cloth). Making and working with my hands is in my blood. My Tongan ethnicity has played a fundamental role in the way I see and relate to the world and had a direct effect on how I approached the ‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures research project.

I was raised on the North Shore of Auckland and attended a predominantly *palangi* (European), middle-class, all-girls secondary school from the mid- to late 1980s.¹ I recall there were only a few other Pacific students, and certainly none identified as Tongan. My teachers never asked me about my identity, an experience that left me feeling culturally invisible. Despite being cognizant of my bicultural upbringing, I struggled to find a deep connection to either of my cultures, and this added strain to my inner turmoil of identity. My parents' well-meaning decision at the time to only speak English to their children compounded my sense of feeling like an outsider. However, my first visual arts teacher, the well-known New Zealand artist Judy Darragh, recognized a creative capacity in me of which I was not fully aware. Her vision of my potential as an art student resonated with an aspect of my personal identity I had not yet explored. As a visual arts student, I finally felt visible and validated, a powerful drive for success.



Figure 1. Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck, untitled selection of mixed media paintings of various sizes submitted for the Bursary Painting Examination, 1989. Courtesy of the artist

From that time onward, my visual arts teachers invoked the critical confidence I needed to pursue a personal journey of identity through the arts. They also supported my burgeoning dream of becoming a professional artist by highlighting the viable options for developing my art practice at the tertiary level. At my prerequisite university interview, I distinctly remember standing by my artworks and telling the lecturers the story behind my paintings. Beyond their colorful patterns, these pictures spoke of my family, culture, and identity (Fig. 1). The connection between my story and my work made a meaningful impression, and consequently, I became the first woman of Tongan descent to graduate from Elam School of Fine Arts in 1995. Artist and curator Ane Tonga has noted that my “unique pictorial language has brought aspects of Tongan cultural heritage from the fringes to the center of contemporary New Zealand.”² My passion for the arts, and my desire to inspire others to discover the possibilities in themselves that I had found through this field, led me to teach visual arts at a full primary school. Teaching has provided me with an awareness of the intersection of the creative arts industry and visual arts education sectors.

Both my educational journey and achievements are founded on the deliberate actions of my ancestors and visual arts teachers. The attainment of success in terms of seeking a better quality of life is a topic that is inherently and consistently woven throughout the history of Pacific communities living in New Zealand. Likewise, the drive to pursue further opportunities is the leading cause of migration across the world. Such was the case with my ancestors, whose adventurous spirits as inner compasses propelled them to travel over vast expanses of land and ocean in order to fulfill their dreams of a better life. From family stories—of my paternal great-grandparents Hermann and Martha Dyck owning a bakery in Sandhof, Germany; of my maternal great-grandfather Viliami Wolfgramm’s talent as a boat builder; and of my maternal grandmother and namesake Vaikalafi Hemaloto’s talent as a dressmaker—I learned that through my veins run traces of my elders’ creative and entrepreneurial capacities and a quest for determining our destiny. I wanted to locate myself in relation to my educational and artistic journey in order to contextualize the cultural and personal experiences that had propelled my artistic responses to the 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures research project and shaped my position as an artist, teacher, and researcher of Tongan ethnicity.

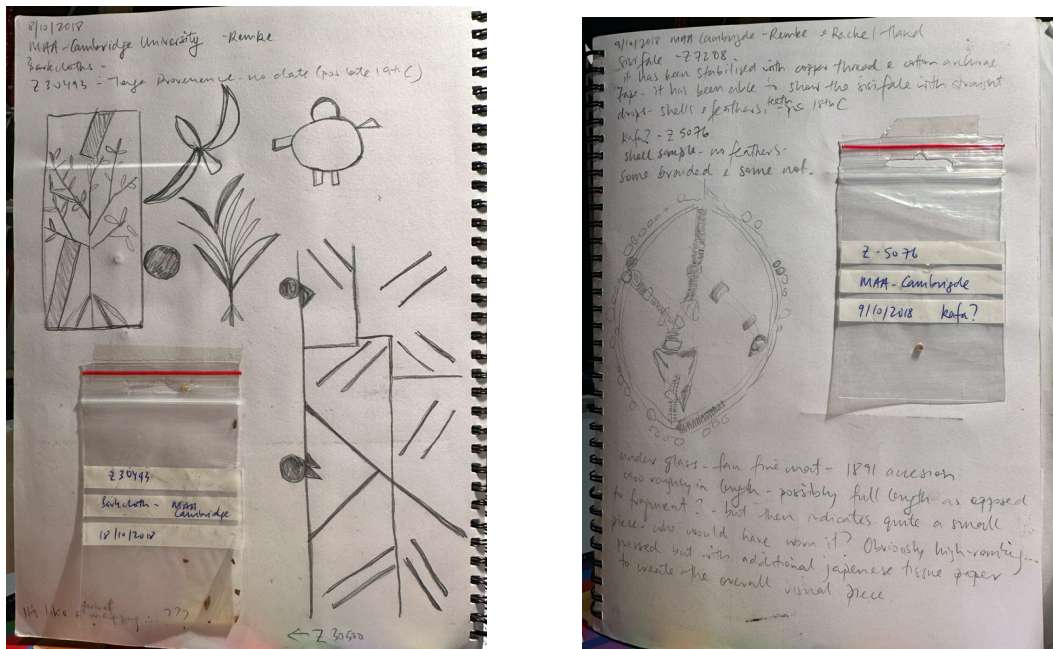


Figure 2. Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck, workbook sketches, 2018. Photographs courtesy of the artist

Exploring our Ancient Stories: Responding as a Creative Practitioner

My role as an investigator-artist for the 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures research project, alongside senior Tongan *tufunga* (expert) Sopoalemalama Filipe Tohi, has been in the vein of looking through a contemporary maker's eyes at Tongan artifacts collected in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This approach was fundamental as our creative goal was to produce an exhibition of new works, all in response to the artefacts we had the privilege to be in direct contact with. My particular interest was understanding their origins, the materials used at the time, and the creative processes involved in their making. Notwithstanding, I was also invested in attempting to bring back the lost or forgotten stories that lay behind these amazing treasures of our Tongan people, whose makers and the techniques they employed were once known, but are now forgotten. As our museum visits continued, so did the often-imposed strict policies that prevent photos taken in museum stores from being published (largely for security reasons). To ensure discoveries were recorded and could be disseminated, my workbook became a source of important documentation (Fig. 2).



Figure 3. Nimafā Collective (Vea Mafile'o, Emily Mafile'o, Luana Dyck, and Dagmar Dyck), installation view of *Sisi Fale*, 2021. Moving image and sculpture installation, Pah Homestead, 2021. Photograph by Raymond Sagapolutele. Courtesy of the artists



Figure 4. Nimafā Collective (Vea Mafile'o, Emily Mafile'o, Luana Dyck, and Dagmar Dyck), *Sisi Fale* (detail), 2021. Moving image and sculpture installation, Pah Homestead, 2021. Photograph by Raymond Sagapolutele. Courtesy of the artists

For me, a stand-out artifact in our research was the *sisi fale* (waist garment)—a type of textile *koloa* (“‘wealth’, ‘possessions’ or ‘what one values’”)³ that is no longer made—in the collection of the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford University, England. It was an exquisite example of the masterful craftsmanship of these incredibly precious items, and it literally took my breath away. In terms of who would have worn them, the delicacy of materials and intricacy of construction indicated that it would have been a person of very high or chiefly rank. The fact that the feathers were still attached and that one could still see a hint of the original bright coloring further indicated its prestigious nature. The materials used for the *sisi fale* were all regarded as sacred in Tonga, and the process of assembling them into a garment for chiefs was itself a sacred act.⁴

The beauty and significance of this piece propelled me to collaborate with my sister, Luana Dyck, and Tongan creative sisters, Ve'a and Emily Mafile'ō. Collectively, we created our own interpretation of *sisi fale*, which became a major work for the *Ancient Futures* exhibition in Aotearoa (Figs. 3–4). Seeking further understanding of the significance and purpose of the *sisi fale*, we organized a *talanoa* (conversation) with philosophy scholar Hūfanga 'Okusitino Māhina to help guide our thinking. We designed a response referencing *heliaki*—the Tongan art of depicting something indirectly or saying something but meaning something else. Leaning into our creative strengths, Luana took the lead with her floral-styling skills, and Emily and Ve'a contributed a moving-image soundscape, contextualizing a reverent Tongan event during which, if *sisi fale* were still being made, they surely would have been worn.

The privilege of having the ability to hold the beautiful artifacts we encountered was never far from my mind. It was quite something just to feel the physical weight of our *pōvai* (war clubs) and to consider their potential damage to one's opponent. Recognizing the hardness of the wood, these clubs were beautifully and masterfully incised. It made one ponder the types of tools and materials used to create these pieces of weaponry and status, and the significant artistic skill and innovation of our warrior ancestors.

Other highlights were the *ngatu* (barkcloth) collections housed at the Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (CUMAA) in the United Kingdom and the Etnografiska Museet in Stockholm. The *ngatu* in both collections featured sophisticated aesthetics, with highly abstract renderings and compositions of geometric shapes and forms. As a research team, our attempts to “read” these *ngatu* prompted ongoing questions, often about the histories being recorded at specific times and places by once-identifiable makers for particular recipients. The *ngatu* spoke to me as typographical documentation, which appears

both physical and celestial in nature, with an abstraction quite different from the narratives of contemporary *ngatu*. The painting *M.A.P.S* (Fig. 5) responds to my premise that part of the functionality of these ancient *ngatu* was marking significant geographical sites. The elements of shape and color form the basis of my re-interpretation, allowing a layering of my own recontextualized *kupesesi* (pattern) situated in *tu'atonga* (i.e., the Tongan diaspora in Aotearoa New Zealand).



Figure 5. Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck, *M.A.P.S.*, 2020. Acrylic and spray paint on wood board, 160 x 200 cm. Photograph courtesy of the artist

Ways of Working: Navigating Time and Space

Understanding the importance of interpersonal relationships between our project team and the institutions enacted the Tongan concept of *tauhi vā* (keeping good relationships). An epistemological lens shows that views of time and space are arranged and experienced differently within and across cultures.⁵ Seve-Williams states that *tā-vā* can be understood as a process that necessitates “the mediation of social and intellectual spaces in order to create harmony.”⁶ An extension of this theory is *tauhi vā*. Rather than a transactional understanding of relationships that

can be concluded by agreement or equivalent exchange, in *tauhi vā*, connections do not begin and end with “you” or “me.” The concept of *vā* is multi-dimensional, fluid, and can transcend generations. It has the ability to pierce through geographical boundaries and harness the memories of a time and place in which our ancestors shared values, thoughts, and ideas. The richness of knowing who we are as Tongans emerges—an awareness that enables the use of tools for navigating the present and the future.



Figure 6. Rachel Hand and Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck examine a *sisi fale* at the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge, United Kingdom, October 2018. Photograph courtesy of Denis Gaudin

While our project team visited more than twenty museum collections spanning the globe, the way in which Rachel Hand and her team at CUMAA engaged with Filipe and me acknowledged our Indigenous genealogy connected to these objects. Often, when you approach museum collections and objects, you are to wear gloves to preserve the items and protect yourself from traces of chemicals used to maintain them. However, Rachel told us, “Dagmar and Filipe, I am happy for you not to wear gloves. These belong to you, these are your people, these are your ancestors, and you have every right to have that skin-to-object touch” (Fig. 6). It was a beautiful example of nurturing *tauhi vā* with the members of the Indigenous communities that travel so far to be with their ancestral treasures.

My admiration for those like Rachel, who are positioned throughout the various ethnology collections, grew with this project. Listening to Rachel candidly share how she engages with our collections heightened my understanding of the critical roles she and others like her play in providing platforms and experiences for our treasures to be cared for and respectfully shared. Throughout our travels, we encountered practitioners who were not only welcoming but also grateful for our company. It further struck me that much of the work with Indigenous objects in museum collections is done in silos, and curators are often assigned to other collections within the museum system. Therefore, Oceanic collections are typically looked after by one, maybe two people. I believe it could be, at times, lonely work.



Figure 7. Lady Dowager Tuna Fielekepa delivering her keynote presentation, 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures symposium, Nuku'alofa, Tonga, October 9, 2019. Photograph courtesy of Dagmar Dyck

Back to the Motherland: Imagining Our Past to Create Our Future

Early in the project, a collective decision was made that the first place we needed to share our findings and exhibit our first body of work was obvious; we had to take 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures back to the motherland: Tonga. The idea for an arts symposium was born out of the desire to also include as many of our fellow

Aotearoa-based creatives, supporters, and academics in the journey as possible. The weeklong event in October 2019 was hosted in Tonga's capital, Nuku'alofa. The program involved a two-day art symposium, alongside several art exhibition openings, dance performances, film festival screenings, and village outreach. Most enriching was connecting with local Tongan creatives and knowledge-holders who are the backbone of our wider Tongan arts movement. Lady Dowager Tuna Fielekepa's keynote presentation included aspects of her personal story concerning her knowledge and understanding of the societal context surrounding the histories, functionality, and processes of tapa-making (Fig. 7). Her wisdom and grace were evident when she proclaimed:

Ko e me'a mahu'inga taha 'i he mo'ui ko 'etau tauhi vā lelei mo e kakaí. Pea 'i he 'ene peheé, kuo pau ke fai ia 'i he manava 'ofa māfana . . . pea neongo te ke 'ilo faka'atamai ia, ka 'e 'ikai hano tatau mo hono fai 'aki ia 'a ho lotó mo'oni.

The most important thing in life is our relationship and connection with people. And with this, there must be warmth . . . you can know it in your head, but it is in your heart that matters.

We realized that hosting the conference at a hotel was not conducive to reaching the kind of audience and community that we needed to consult with to help fill some of the gaps in the stories behind many of the artifacts. As a result, we ensured that we would visit the villages of Hihifo and Lapaha. It was imperative to take our findings to the people, as we knew the knowledge-holders would be firmly located in our villages. Furthermore, being in Tonga was also a chance to connect with local artists; the more eyes that were on these objects and artifacts, the more potential there would be to better our own understanding of them.

Final Reflections: A Journey of Gratitude

Without a doubt, it has been a huge honor to be involved in this project; Filipe and I know full well that so many of our Tongan people do not have similar opportunities. Across our travels we have been fortunate to work with a broad group of anthropologists and museum curators, all interested and passionate about our Tongan past, present, and future. It was an incredible opportunity to have them journey alongside us and help us navigate spaces, adding to the robust *talanoa* (conversation) and providing their own evidence-based understandings.

Despite the sadness that comes from realizing the extent of Indigenous, intergenerational knowledge loss, and the role and responsibility, both positive and negative, that museums have played in it, I remain steadfast in my quest to decolonize and re-Indigenize museum and curatorial practices. Having been afforded insight into the politics of some museum institutions and their self-imposed barriers to our ancestral *koloa*, I know that projects such as 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures represent all that is possible and powerful when institutions, academia, creatives, and Indigenous communities—devoid of ego or power—authentically join together for a common purpose.

Finally, collaborating with Filipe afforded me a privileged insight into his extraordinary creative practice. Working together as a male artist and female artist aided in bringing a balance to everything, not just with regard to gender but also with how we place ourselves within Tongan culture through our different lived experiences and worldviews. Filipe has always reassured me that my being Tongan is good enough. As Lady Tuna has also whispered into the chambers of my soul, "You can have all the perceived knowledge, but without a connection to your heart and your people, it is all for nothing."

**Selected Works from the 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures Exhibition, Pah Home-
stead, Auckland**



Figure 8. Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck, *Where We Sit and Gather*, 2020. Acrylic and spray paint on wooden board, 160 x 100 cm each. Photograph courtesy of Raymond Sagapolutele



Figure 9. Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck, *Reflection of an Existing Order*, 2021. Acrylic and spray paint on collage, *feta'aki* (plain tapa cloth), and wooden board, 160 x 100 cm. Photograph courtesy of Raymond Sagapolutele



Figure 10. Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck, *Relishing the Splendour*, 2021. Screenprint, 95 x 65 cm. Photograph courtesy of Raymond Sagapolutele



Figure 11. Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck, untitled working drawings, 1994. Gouache and pencil on paper, 37.5 x 35 cm each. Photograph courtesy of Raymond Sagapolutele



Figure 12. Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck, *Markers of Community I* (left) and *Markers of Community II* (right), 2020. Acrylic on *feta'aki* (plain tapa cloth) and canvas, 1020 x 780 cm each. Photograph courtesy of Raymond Sagapolutele



Figure 13. Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck assisted by Alexis Neal and Nilesh Selwaswala, *Worn to Imply*, 2019. Handwoven and sewn relief hand-printed paper, 66 x 134 cm. Photograph courtesy of Raymond Sagapolutele



Figure 14. Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck assisted by Alexis Neal and Nilesh Selwaswala, *Worn to Suggest*, 2019. Handwoven and sewn relief printed paper, 65 x 100.4 cm. Photograph courtesy of Raymond Sagapolutele

Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck (Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland) is a visual artist and educator of Tongan, Dutch, Polish, and German descent. In 1995, she completed a postgraduate diploma in fine arts at Elam School of Fine Arts—the first woman of Tongan descent to do so. Her current PhD research aims to contribute to arts-based inquiry by demonstrating how Moana art forms can serve as powerful tools for reimagining cultural identity, power dynamics, and creative expression in visual arts education.

Notes

¹ The Tongan term *pāpalangi* (shortened to *pālangi*) means “people from the sky.” When Captain Cook sailed into Tonga, the locals thought the tall masts of the ship went into the sky, so they called its sailors *pāpalangi*. Since only Europeans came off the ship, the term *pāpalangi* evolved into meaning “white people.” Mary M. McCoy and Siotame Drew Havea, *Making Sense of Tonga: A Visitor’s Guide to the Kingdom’s Rich Polynesian Culture* (Nuku’alofa, Tonga: Training Group of the Pacific, 2006), 3.

² Ane Tonga, “Between the Folds: New Work by Dagmar Dyck,” *Art New Zealand* 158 (2016): 75.

³ Phyllis Herda, “The Changing Texture of Textiles in Tonga,” *The Journal of the Polynesian Society* 108, no. 2 (1999): 149.

⁴ Adrienne Kaeppler, “Eighteenth Century Tonga: New Interpretations of Tongan Society and Material Culture at the Time of Captain Cook,” *Man* 6, no. 2 (1971): 204–20. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2798262>

⁵ 'Ōkusitino Māhina, “Time, Space and Culture: A New Tā-Vā Theory of Moana Anthropology,” *Pacific Studies* 40, no. 1–2 (April/August 2017): 105–32.

⁶ Nuhsifa Seve-Williams, “Reading Realities through Tā-Vā,” *Pacific Studies* 40, no. 1–2 (April/August 2017): 184.

SOPOLEMALAMA FILIPE TOHI

Past and Present Ancient Futures

Abstract

Tongan artist Sopoalemalama Filipe Tohi presents a pictorial essay of his work included in the 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures exhibition, part of the larger project of the same name. Works include formative ones from early in his career, along with those created during the research for the project.

Keywords: *Sopoalemalama Filipe Tohi, Tonga, art, lashing, lalava, sculpture, Pah Homestead, 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures*

My artistic practice has two levels. One is based in a traditional Tongan cultural practice of *lalava*, or sennit lashing. Before the arrival of metal, *lalava* lashings bound a wide variety of items around the Pacific including houses, tools, and canoes. *Lalava* were both functional and decorative; I believe that *lalava* patterns were a mnemonic device for representing a life philosophy advocating balance in daily living, and were tied to cultural knowledge. I was awarded my Samoan title, Sopoalemalama, by Tupua Tamasese Tupuola Tufuga Efi in 2004 for lashing his Fale Maota in Nofualí'i, Sāmoa. Another example of my *lalava* practice is the Fale Pasifika at Waipapa Taumata Rau|The University of Auckland.

The second aspect of my practice is more contemporary and includes working in a large variety of mediums: painting on canvas, carving in wood and stone, and designing abstract sculptural patterns in metal and other materials. These patterns are based on *lalava* and their application in other dimensional forms moves the traditional to a contemporary setting.¹

Filipe Tohi was born in Tonga and emigrated to New Zealand in 1978 with the goal of becoming an artist. In the early 1980s, he taught at Rangimarie Arts and Crafts in Taranaki. He left to become a full-time artist in 1990. Tohi regularly participates alongside other artists who work with stone at gatherings known as stone symposia around the world and his work is held in collections globally. He is a featured artist in the permanent exhibition Tangata O Le Moana at Te Papa Tongarewa, and has held residencies in Japan, Cook Islands, Fiji, England, and the

United States. In 2023, he was recognized for his lifetime contribution to the arts of Aotearoa by being presented with the John and Jo Gow Sculpture Arts Laureate Award. After living and working in Aotearoa New Zealand for forty-five years, Sopolimalama relocated his art practice to Tonga in 2023.

Notes

¹ I would like to acknowledge my wife, Hilary Scothorn, for her assistance with the production of the *'Amui 'i Mu'a* catalogue and this essay. I thank her for her ongoing management of my practice.

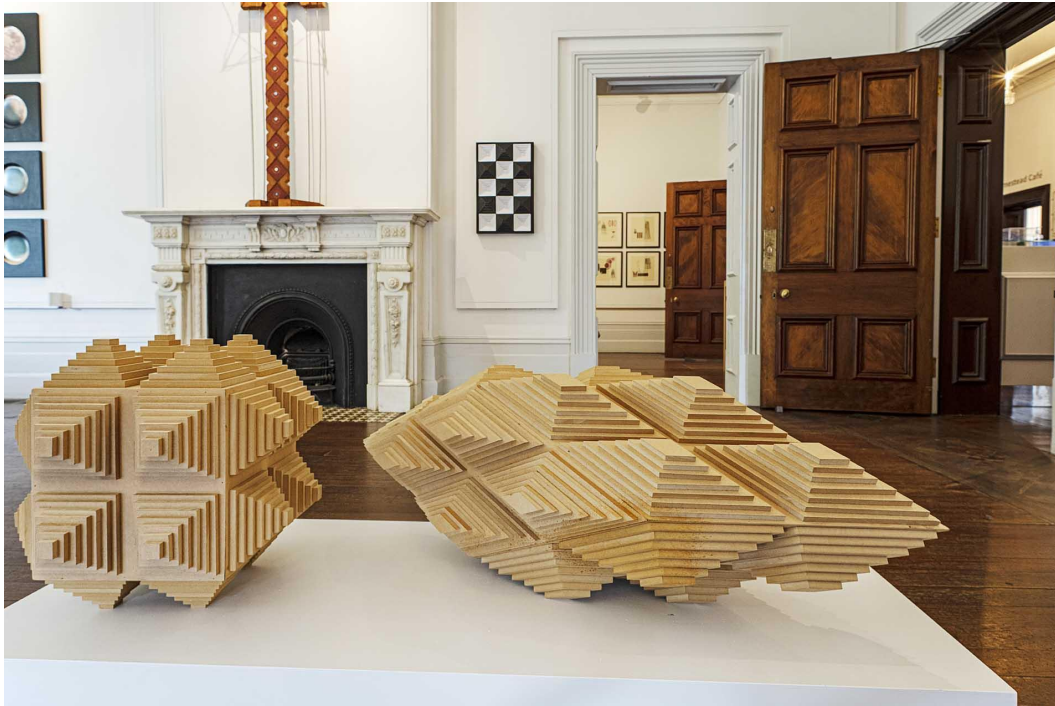


Figure 1. Sololemalama Filipe Tohi, *Haufakalava*, circa 2000. Plywood, 40 x 43 x 130 cm and 53 x 50 x 50 cm. Installation view in *'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures*, Pah Homestead, 2021. Collection of the artist. Photograph courtesy of Raymond Sagapolutele



Figure 2. Sololemalama Filipe Tohi, *Puleika*, 2021. Acrylic on canvas, 120 x 79.5 cm. Private collection. Photograph courtesy of Raymond Sagapolutele



Figure 3. Sopolemalama Filipe Tohi, *Pule Ngangana*, 2020. Screen print, 110 x 80 cm. Private collection. Photograph courtesy of Raymond Sagapolutele



Figures 4 and 5. Sololemalama Filipe Tohi, *Manuvaka*, 2008. Taranaki andesite, 66 x 45 x 50 cm. Installation view in *'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures*, Pah Homestead, 2021. Collection of Arts House Trust, Auckland. Photographs courtesy of Raymond Sagapolutele



Figure 6. Sololemalama Filipe Tohi, *Manutala*, 1992. Wood, steel, and sennit, 224 x 60 x 105 cm. Installation view in 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures, Pah Homestead, 2021. Collection of the artist. Photograph courtesy of Raymond Sagapolutele



Figure 7. Sololemalama Filipe Tohi, *Manutala* (detail), 1992. Wood, steel, and sennit, 224 x 60 x 105 cm. Installation view in *'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures*, Pah Homestead, 2021. Collection of the artist. Photograph courtesy of Raymond Sagapolutele



Figure 8. Sololemalama Filipe Tohi, *Four Kali*, 2021. Wood, sennit, and bone; (left to right) 18 x 11 x 42 cm, 14 x 10 x 34 cm, 13 x 11 x 36 cm, and 17 x 13 x 42 cm. Installation view in *'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures*, Pah Homestead, 2021. Collection of the artist. Photograph courtesy of Raymond Sagapolutele

SEINI TAUFA

'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures: Fatu fala e fale lalanga (Weaving Threads)

Abstract

This article explores the intertwined worldviews of Queen Sālote Tupou III and Tongan scholar Epeli Hau'ofa on identity, kinship, and self-determination in the context of Tonga's cultural preservation and artistic legacy. Through the lens of contemporary Tongan artists Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck and Sopolemalama Filipe Tohi, the 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures project demonstrates how their artistic practices reclaim Tongan cultural narratives from colonial collections. This article examines their shared commitment to reconnecting with ancestral knowledge, navigating diasporic identities, and challenging institutional barriers to reclaim the koloa (treasures) and histories embedded in their art and practice.

Keywords: *'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures, Tonga, Tongan diaspora, Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck, Sopolemalama Filipe Tohi, Queen Sālote, art, material culture, koloa, museums, decolonizing museums*

For his book, *The Friendly Islanders: A Story of Queen Salote and Her People* (1967), Kenneth Bain (Secretary to the Tongan Government from 1953 to 1956) interviewed Queen Sālote Tupou III (1900–1965) who said, “There is a generation of young people growing up, who do not know who they are and to whom they belong. If Tonga is to survive[,] the ties of kinship must be strengthened and not loosened.”¹ In a world increasingly influenced by Western views and ideologies, Queen Sālote understood the importance of identity—“being connected to, and belonging”; of not losing who we are as Tongan people even as we became a diaspora. Even then, she knew that to navigate forward, we needed to look back.

Three decades later, in *Our Sea of Islands* (1994), Tongan scholar Epeli Hau'ofa wrote, “Whatever we produce must not be a version of our existing reality, which is largely a creation of imperialism; it must be different and of our own making. We should not forget that human reality is human creation. If we fail to create our own, someone else will do it for us by default.”² Hau'ofa believed in an individual's right to be the custodian of their “own knowledge” so that their realities would be not only learned and understood but also shared.

The worldviews of Queen Sālote and Hau’ofa, with their emphasis on the vital relationship between strong kin networks and self-determination, are shared by Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck and Sopolomalama Filipe Tohi, another daughter and son of Tonga, whose *nima mea’a* (arts) and *kalia* (vessels) are exhibited in the various ‘Amui ‘i Mu’a/Ancient Futures exhibitions.

Background

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, distinctions were drawn between the written histories of the Western world and the storytelling or “myths” of non-literate communities. Tongan treasures gifted or traded to Europeans on voyages of scientific exploration into the Pacific traveled far from home. In Europe, they became the illustrations of histories narrated by explorers, collectors, and savants who neither thought like Tongans nor fully understood the cultural significance of the *koloa* (treasures) now in their care.

Work to remedy this situation began in earnest with projects launched by Queen Sālote under the auspices of the Tonga Traditions Committee, which she chaired from 1954–65, whereby Tongan scholars were sent into museum collections and archives to look for and repatriate Tongan knowledge. Concurrently, Queen Sālote established the Langafonua ‘a Fafine Tonga (Women’s Council of Tonga) with the vision to “work in one accord” —*Ngaue loto taha pe*— to ensure a better quality of life for all women of Tonga and their families. In the ensuing decades, Tongan and European scholars alike have researched Tongan arts in collections worldwide and in Tonga, including the poetic works and songs of Queen Sālote herself, which encode Tongan history in *lea heliaki*, the Tongan art of saying one thing but meaning another. There are now Tongan curators in key roles at Te Papa Tongarewa, the Auckland Art Gallery, Auckland War Memorial Museum, and others who work in heritage roles in Tonga itself. Tongan artists have been awarded prestigious residencies and held extensive exhibitions in museums and galleries worldwide.

In 2017, a research and art development project supported by the Royal Society of New Zealand Marsden Fund and titled “Ancient Futures: Late Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century Tongan Arts and Their Legacies” set out to further contribute to the reclaiming of Tongan narratives in early collections by exploring late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Tongan arts and their legacies through the eyes of Tongan artists Tohi and Dyck, and in conversation with academics. From the perspective of an outsider looking in, the differences in

Tohi and Dyck’s upbringing (male vs. female, Tongan-born vs. Aotearoa New Zealand-born, Tongan vs. Tongan–German) and the contexts they navigate reflect what Tongan society looks like today.

I sat down with both artists to *talanoa* (talk critically yet harmoniously) about their journey and what they learned leading up to ‘*Amui ‘I Mu’a/Ancient Futures*. Throughout the *talanoa* it became clear that their practices complemented each other, and that while *Ancient Futures* was a four-year project, what was on display in the exhibition of the same name has been an evolution of their lifetimes’ work. While at a surface level, it is easy to determine differences between these two individuals, the *talanoa* provided insights into how similar they are. The following sections explore aspects of their shared worldview.

The Love of Art

The love of art was engrained in both Dyck and Tohi from a young age. Dyck loved art, loved everything about it, and Tohi covered the pages of his school books with drawings of his surroundings. Despite growing up in different parts of the *moana* (the Pacific Ocean)—Tonga and Aotearoa New Zealand—art was not encouraged nor considered within their social spheres as a viable career path. However, it was the belief from a teacher who saw the potential in their artistic creativity that made a difference.

I had Judy Darragh as my art teacher. Judy did something critical. She said to the counselor, “When Dagmar comes to choose her subjects, please encourage her to take art because I can see something in her and I would love for her to keep going.” That critical moment was the first time someone had seen me like that and validated that part of me. (Dyck)

When I went to school, my books were covered in drawings. One of my teachers took me to the principal’s office to complain. At fifteen years old I was scared because I thought I was going to be suspended. The principal saw my art and asked me to draw a cat and a portrait of him. At prize-giving, I was surprised when they called my name, and I received an art award. (Tohi)

In the words of Aristotle, “Those who know, do. Those who understand, teach.” Both teachers understood the raw gift that was waiting to be harnessed,

and for a boy running around in Tongatapu and a girl whose ethnic background was constantly mistaken, it was the water that was needed to grow a seed.

Longing for Home

As they progressed as artists, Dyck and Tohi found themselves in environments that often felt foreign. Where words were not adequate to describe their feelings, art became their voice. While both in Aotearoa New Zealand, there was a personal yearning for things “Tongan,” an internal longing to find oneself and to connect.

I can still remember when the *Art of Tonga* (Keith St. Cartmail, 1997) book was released.³ I remember seeing it at this bookshop and for me, it was the most amazing thing—feeling connected to something like that. That book held me for two or three years. (Dyck)

Speaking in English and the written text was foreign but using my hands [and] creating—it was a natural part of who I am. I used to always go to the beach, where I would cook, draw, and watch the ocean, longing for home (Tonga), thinking of the vast ocean and how somehow these shores connected with the shores back home. (Tohi)

This longing also influenced Tohi’s interactions with other Indigenous artists.

As a boy, my dad was lost at sea and my grandmothers raised me. One [grandmother] grew up before missionary arrival, so she shared stories of Maui and Tangaloa. When I worked with Māori artists, I was drawn to them because their stories reminded me of home. (Tohi)

Working Together on *Ancient Futures*

Ancient Futures provided an opportunity for two Tongan artists to add to their basket of knowledge; to “see, feel, touch, and connect (mind, body, and spirit)” with the *mana* (prestige, ancestral power) attached to the *koloa* in front of them;⁴ an experience that would not have been as rich had only one Tongan embarked on the voyage as opposed to two. Their insights, passion, and ability to connect to

the team and the *koloa* on an emotional level allowed for deep meaningful engagement, true reflection, and creative inspiration.

Tonga is a country built on kinship and connections, and while both Tohi and Dyck recognize the “privilege to see what most cannot” due to geographic divides, there was a sadness in seeing how institutional walls and rules can restrict the sharing of the *koloa* with their *kainga* (family, village, community). They note:

Each piece we saw has a story, there is history tied to it, and when it left Tonga we lost a part of ourselves . . . [Europeans] came and brought their ways and we adopted them, and we put our traditional beliefs [and] our *koloa* to the side, and slowly we forgot. We were told that our ways of thinking were dark and not civilized, and we conformed. Yes, they took our *koloa* and preserved it but they’re confined to their walls, and in turn, we lost our knowledge and our stories. We need to give people, our people, the opportunity to reclaim what is creatively ours. (Tohi)

We’ve documented all of this beautiful stuff, but we often cannot share our photos taken in museum storerooms on social media. On the one hand, we are seeing the *koloa* because museums have been able to hold them in good conditions and for that, we are extremely grateful. But then you ask, how did they get there? How were they acquired? Under what process? While many were gifts made by chiefly people, some of those stories and connections are lost. We have also lost how things have been made, and that is heartbreaking. But we are makers, if they had it, it is in us. (Dyck)

While every request from the project team for access to collections was met with generosity and open doors, experiences varied from institution to institution depending on operational and insurance policies and staffing availability. Various, these included whether or not children could enter the stores (Tohi’s daughter, Dakota, was part of the touring group, and on only one occasion was not permitted into a museum’s stores); if gloves had to be worn by Dyck and Tohi (often they didn’t unless chemical treatments made skin contact unsafe); if large textiles could be unrolled for viewing (usually possible only when museums were closed, so that gallery spaces could be used for this purpose); and, perhaps most significantly, whether forms had to be signed restricting photos to use for “research purposes only.”

Dyck reminds us: “Then came the question, *who does it belong to and are they really the real deal about decolonizing and indigenizing museum practice. . .?*”

If we can get more eyes on this it would be wonderful.” Thus, *‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures* is not the end of a project, but a departure point—a continuation of their lifelong work. In true Tongan fashion, it is the *hala manga‘ono* (intersection to six roads), a proactive way of moving forward and creating more. With their passion for arts and Tonga, it is my hope as a Tongan that emerging Tongan artists throughout the *moana* are inspired to look back, reflect, and, with confidence, navigate forward.

‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures: *Fatu fala e fale lalanga* (Weaving Threads)

‘I he tohi ‘a Kenneth Bain (Sekelitali ‘o e Pule‘anga Tongá meí he 1953 ki he 1956) ‘oku ‘iloa ko e *The Friendly Islanders: A Story of Queen Salote and her People* (1967) na‘e faka‘eke‘eke ai ‘a Kuini Sālote Tupou III kuó ne unga fonuá, pea na‘á ne folofola ai ‘o pehē: “Kuo tupu hake ‘a e to‘utangata ‘o e kuongá ní ‘o ‘ikai ke nau ‘ilo‘i kinautolu mo honau tupu‘angá. Kapau ‘oku tau mahu‘inga‘ia hotau Tongá, kuo pau ke toe vāofi ange ‘a e nofo ‘a kāingá.” ‘I ha kuonga kuo toe mālohi ange ‘a e fusi kitautolu ‘e he tō‘onga mo‘ui faka-Uēsité, na‘e ‘afio‘i ‘e Kuini Sālote ‘a e mahu‘inga hoto kitá (‘ilo‘i kita mo hoto tupu‘angá) ke ‘oua ‘e mole pea tukuange hoto Tongá tautefito ‘i he ngaahi fonua mulí. ‘I he taimi ko iá, na‘e mahino kiate ia, ‘e makatu‘unga ‘etau laka ki mu‘á ‘i he‘etau ako meí he kuohilí.

Hili mei ai ‘a e ta‘u ‘e 30 tupu, na‘e pehē ‘e ‘Ēpeli Hau‘ofa ko e tokotaha Tonga mataotao ‘i he mala‘e ‘o e akó: “‘Oku totonu ke tau fononga fakatatau mo hotau ngaahi fa‘unga motu‘á pea ‘ikai hē he ngaahi ākenga mo e fakalakalaka mei he kau mulí. ‘Oku totonu ke tau manatu‘i ke tau tataki hotau fonongá kae ‘oua ‘e tākiekina kitautolu ‘e ní‘ihi kehe. Kapau ‘e ‘ikai pukepuke mo tauhi ‘a hotau fa‘unga motu‘á ‘e taki hala‘i ‘a e to‘utangata ‘o e kaha‘ú.” ‘Oku tui ‘a ‘Ēpeli, ‘oku ‘i ai ‘a e totonu fakafo‘ituitui ki hono fakatolonga ‘o e ngaahi fa‘unga motu‘á pea ‘ikai ngata pē ‘i hono vahevahe atú ka ‘oku mahino ngofua.

‘Oku kau fakataha ‘a Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck mo Sopole- malama Filipe Tohi ‘i he vīsone fakamamani lahi na‘e ma‘u ‘e Kuini Sālote mo ‘Ēpelí. Ke tau tokanga makehe ke vāofi ‘a e nofo ‘a kāingá mo e ngāue fakatahá. ‘E faka‘ali‘ali atu ‘a ‘ena ngaahi lavame‘a ‘i he ngāue fakamea‘á mo e ‘aatí ‘i he kātōanga ‘a e *‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures*.

Talateu

‘I he senituli 18 mo e 19, na’e fakamahu’inga’i ‘a e ngaahi fakamatala ne hiki tohí. Kuo ‘i ai ‘a e tō kehekehe ‘i he ngaahi- hi lekooti kuo hikí mo e ngaahi fakamatala fekau’aki mo e koloa fakamea’a mei Tonga kuo ‘ave ‘e he kau papālangí ‘i hono ma’u ko e me’a’ofa, ngaahi fakafetongi koloa pe fefakatau’aki. Na’e hoko eni lolotonga ‘enau folau mai ki he Pasifiki ‘i he ngaahi fakatotolo fakasaianisi. ‘I ‘Iulopé, na’e fakafalala ‘a e ngaahi fakamatala na’e hiki tohí mei he ma’u ‘a e kau folau tahí, kau fakatotolo fakasainisi mo kinautolu na’a nau tauhi ‘a e ngaahi koloá. Na’e ‘ikai kakato ‘a e ngaahi fakamatala na’a nau hikí he na’e ‘ikai ke nau ‘ilo’i ‘a e ngaahi koloá fakatautaha mo hono mahu’ingá.

Kuo fakahoko mai eni ‘a e ngāue ke fakamā’opo’opo mo fakatonutonu ‘a e ngaahi me’á ni ‘o kau ai ‘a e polokalama ngāue na’e kamata ‘e Kuini Sālote fakataha mo e *Tonga Traditions Committee* ‘a ia na’á ne hoko ko e sea ai mei he 1954-65. Na’e lava ke folau ai ha kau mataotao ‘i he mala’e ‘o e akó ki he ngaahi misiume kuo tauhi ai ‘a e ngaahi koloá ni ke toe vakai’i pea ke fakafoki mai ‘a e ngaahi ‘ilo ko ‘ení. ‘I he taimi tatau, na’e fokotu’u ai ‘e Kuini Sālote ‘a e Langafonua ‘a Fafine Tonga (*Women’s Council of Tonga*). Na’e fakataumu’a ke ngāue loto taha pea tokoni’i mo hiki hake ‘a e mo’ui ‘a e fefine Tongá mo honau ngaahi fāmilí. Talu mei he taimi ko iá, kuo ngāue fakataha mai ai ‘a e kau ‘Iulopé mo e kāinga Tongá ‘i he mala’e ‘o e akó ke fakamā’opo’opo mo fekumi ki he ngaahi ngāue faka’aati kuo tauhi ‘i Tonga mo e ngaahi fonua mulí. ‘Oku kau heni ‘a e ngaahi maaui mo e ngaahi ta’anga ‘a Kuini Sālote ‘oku kau ai ‘a e ngaahi heliaki fekau’aki mo e hisitōlia ‘o Tongá. Kuo ‘i ai eni ha kau tu’ukimau’a Tonga ‘i he mala’e ‘o e ‘ātí ‘i he *Te Papa Tongarewa, The Auckland Art Gallery, Auckland War Memorial Museum* pea mo e kau tauhi fonua ‘i Tongá. Kuo toe foaki foki ki he kau ‘aati Tongá ha ngaahi fakalāngilangi makehe mo ha faingamālie ki he katoanga faka’ali’ali lalahi ‘i he ngaahi misiume mo e fale faka’ali’ali ‘i he opé.

‘I he 2017, na’e fokotu’u ai ‘a e polokalama ngāue fekumi mo fakalalakala ‘oku ‘iloa ko e *Ancient Futures*. Na’e fakapa’anga ‘a e ngāue ni ‘e he *Royal Society of New Zealand Marsden Fund* pea na’e fakataumu’a ia ke fakato- nutonu mo fakafoki mai ‘a e ngaahi ‘ilo fekau’aki mo e ngaahi koloa mei he kongā ki mui ‘o e senituli 18 mo e kongā ki mu’a ‘o e senituli 19 fakataha mo e ngaahi faka- matala ‘a Tohi mo Dyck mo e kau taukei ‘i he mala’e ‘o e akó. Ko Tohi na’e fā’ele’i ‘i Tonga pea fā’ele’i ‘a Dyck ‘i Nu’u Silá ni; ‘oku ou tui kuo tokoni lahi ‘a e ngaahi a’usia mei hona tupu’angá ki he ngāue ‘okú na fakahokó.

‘I he teuteu eni ki he kātonga ‘Amui ‘i Mu’a/*Ancient Futures*, kuo lava ke fakahoko ‘a e pōtalanoa mo e ongo me’á ni fekau’aki mo ‘ena ngaahi lavame’a pe

a’usiá. Na’e mahino mai mei he pōtalanoá ‘a e fengāue’aki lelei ‘a ‘ena ngaahi ngāue. Neongo ‘oku ta’u ‘e fā ‘a e polo- kalama ngāue ‘a e *Ancient Futures*, ko e ngaahi koloa ‘oku faka’ali’ali atu ‘i he katoangá, ko e ola ia ‘o ‘ena ngāue ‘i he ngaahi ta’u lahi. Neongo ‘a e kehekehe ‘a e ‘ātakai na’a na tupu hake aí, ‘oku mahino mai mei he talanoá, ‘oku ‘i ai ‘a e ngaahi me’a lahi ‘okú na faitatau ai. ‘Oku kau ‘i heni ‘a e:

‘Ofa mo e mateaki’i ‘a e ngāue faka’ātí.

Na’e talu pē ‘ena manako ki he ngāue faka’ātí mei he’ena kei si’í. Na’e manako ma’u pē ‘a Dyck ‘i he ngāue faka’ātí mo ha fa’ahinga me’a pē ‘oku felāve’i mo e ‘ātí. Na’e fonu ma’u pē ‘a e pepa ako ‘a Tohi he ngaahi tā valivali hono ‘ātakaí. Neongo ‘ena tupu hake ‘i ha ongo fonua kehekehe (Tonga mo Nu’u Sila), na’e ‘ikai ke fu’u poupoua ‘a e talen- ití ni ko e pehē ‘e ‘ikai ma’u ha mo’ui mei ai. Na’e tupu meí he fakatokanga’i ‘e he faiakó ‘a e talēniti ‘oku na ma’ú na’e fakaava ai ‘a e matapā kiate kinaua.

Na’e hoko ‘a Judy Darragh ko ‘eku faiako ‘aati. Na’e tokoni lahi ‘a e tokotahá ni kiate au. Na’a ne fekau ki he tokotaha fale’i ‘a e apiakó (counselor), ‘i he taimi ‘e ha’u ai ‘a Dagmar ke fili ‘ene ngaahi lēsoní, fakalotolahi ki ai ke ne fili ‘a e lēsoni ‘ātí he ‘okú ou fakatokanga’i ko hono talēniti eni. Ko e me’a mahu’inga eni he ko e fuofua taimi ia ke fakatokanga’i ai hoku talēniti. (Dyck)

Na’á ku ‘alu pē ki he akó mo ‘eku pepa akó kuo fonu he ngaahi tā valivalí. Na’e lāunga’i au ‘e he taha ‘eku kau faiakó ki he pule akó. Ko hoku ta’u tahananima ia pea na’á ku ilifia he na’a ku pehē ‘e tuli au he akó. Na’e vakai ‘a e pule akó ki he’eku tā valivalí pea na’á ne kole mai ke u tā ha pusi pea mo hano ‘īmisi. Na’á ku ‘ohovale hono ui hoku hingoá mo e foaki hoku pale lolotonga ‘a e tānaki tu’ungá. (Tohi)

Na’e pehē ‘e *Aristotle*, “Ko kinautolu ‘oku nau ma’u ‘a e ‘iló, ‘oku nau ngāue. Ko kinautolu ‘oku nau ma’u ‘a e mahinó, ‘oku nau vahevahe atu.” Na’e mahino ki he ongo faiakó ni ‘a e tufakanga kuo foakí ‘a ia na’e fiema’u ke tokonia mo ngāue’i. Na’e fiema’u ha vai kae tupu ‘a e tenga na’e tō ‘o ha ki’i tamasi’i tupu hake ‘i Tongatapu pea mo ha ki’i ta’ahine na’e fa’a ma’u hala’i ‘e he kakaí hono fonua tupu’angá.

Manatu ki he tupu’angá

‘I he kamata ke fakalalakaka ‘a ‘ena ngāue faka’ātí, ‘okú na fakatokanga’i ‘oku ‘i ai e taimi ‘okú na ‘i ha ngaahi ‘ātakai ‘oku ‘ikai ke na angamaheni ki ai. ‘I he taimi ‘e ní’ihi na’e faka’aonga’i pē ‘a e ‘ātí ke vahevahe’aki ‘a e me’a ‘oku ‘i hona lotó mo e fakakaukáu. Lolotonga ‘ena nofo ‘i Nu’u Sila ní, ‘oku ‘i ai ma’u pē ‘a e vilitaki ke toe vāofi ange mo hona “Tongá.”

‘Oku ou manatu’i ‘a e paaki ‘a e tohi ko e Art of Tonga ‘a Keith St Cartmail ‘i he 1997. Na’e fakafiefia ‘aupito kiate au ‘eku vakai ki he tohi ‘i ha fale fakatau tohi. Na’e hoko ia ko ha fakalotolahi kiate au. (Dyck)

Na’e fo’ou kiate au ‘a e tohi mo e lea faka-Pilitāniá ka na’e faingofua pea hoko ko hoku mālohinga ‘eku ngāue’aki hoku nimá ke fa’u ha me’a pē. Na’á ku fa’a ‘alu ma’u pē ki he matātahí ‘o ngaohi ai ha’áku me’atokoni, tā valivali pea mo siofi ‘a e ‘ōsení mo faka’amu pē ‘okú te ‘i Tonga. ‘I he’eku fakakaukáu ‘oku fehokotaki ‘a e potu tahi ‘oku ou ‘i aí mo e potu tahi ‘o Tongá. (Tohi)

Ko e ‘uhi ko e fuoloa ta’u ‘ene mavahe mei Tongá, mo ‘ene manatu melie ki he tupu’angá, na’e hoko ia ko ha me’a ke toe vā’ofi ai mo e kau ‘aati Māuli ‘o e fonuá ni.

‘I he’eku kei tamasi’í, na’e mole ‘eku tangata’eikí ‘i tahi pea na’e tauhi au ‘e he’eku kui fefiné. Ko e taha ‘o ‘eku fanga kuí, na’e tupu hake ia kimu’a he tū’uta ‘a e kau ngāue fakamisinale. Na’á ne fa’a vahevahe mai ‘a e fanga ki’i fananga ‘o Maui mo Tangaloá. ‘I he’eku ngāue fakataha mo e kau ‘aati Māulí, na’á ku vāofi mo kinautolu koe’uhí ko e fehokotaki ‘i he tukufakaholó pea hoko eni ko e fakamanatu ‘o ‘api. (Tohi)

Ko e ngāue fakataha mo e Ancient Futures

Kuo hoko ‘a e polokalama ngāue Ancient Futures ko ha faingamālie ia ki ha ongo ‘aati Tonga ke tānaki ki he’ena ngaahi a’usiá mo e ‘ilo ‘okú na ma’ú ke sio tonu, ala mo vakai’i pea fehokotaki mo e ngaahi koloa fakamea’a ‘o e kuohilí. ‘Oku toe makehe ‘a e faingamālié ‘i he’ena fakahoko fakataha ení. Kuo hoko ‘a ‘ena ‘iló,

taukey pea mo e ngāue fakataha mo e timi ngāué ke fehokotaki vāofi ai mo e ngaahi koloa ‘o e kuohilí pea ke tokoni ki he ngāue ‘oku hanga mai mei mu‘á.

‘Oku tokoni ‘a e nofo ‘a kāingá mo e feveitokai‘akí ki hono langa hake ‘o Tongá. Neongo ‘a e ma‘u faingamālie makehe ‘a Tohi mo Dyck ke sio tonu ki he ngaahi koloá, na‘e ‘ikai ke na fiemālie koe‘uhí ko ‘ena ‘ilo ‘oku ‘ikai ke ma‘u faingamālie ‘a e kāingá ke nau mamata tonu ki he ngaahi koloá ni koe‘uhí ko e ngaahi feitu‘u kehekehe ‘oku tauhi aí mo hono ngaahi tu‘utu‘uní. Na‘á na pehē:

‘Oku ‘i ai ‘a e hisitōlia makehe ‘o e ngaahi koloá fakatautaha, pea ‘i he taimi na‘e mavahe ai mei Tongá, hangē kuo mole atu ha kupu ‘o kitautolu... Na‘a nau omi (‘a e kau papālangí) mo e ākenga fo‘ou pea tau tali ‘a ‘enau ngaahi tō‘onga mo‘uí. Li‘ekina leva hotau fa‘unga motu‘á, ko ‘etau ngaahi koloá, pea iku ai pē ‘o mole. Na‘a nau talamai ‘oku tau fakapo‘uli mo fakapāpeliane pea tau tui ki ai. ‘Io, na‘a nau ‘ave ‘etau koloá ‘o tauhi pea mole ai ‘a e ngaahi ‘ilo mo e taukey ko iá. ‘Oku mahu‘inga ke ma‘u faingamālie ‘a e Tongá ke mamata mo sio tonu ki he ngaahi ngāue ‘a hotau kāinga ‘i he kuohilí. (Tohi)

Kuó ma lekooti ha ngaahi fakamatala mo faitaa‘i ‘a e ngaahi koloá ni, ka ‘i he taimi lahi ‘oku ‘ikai ke ma ma‘u ha ngofua mei he ngaahi misiumé ke vahevahe atu he ngaluopé. Neongo ení, ‘okú ma hounga‘ia kuo lava ‘e he ngaahi misiumé ‘o tauhi malu mo fakatolonga ‘a e ngaahi koloá ni. ‘I he taimi tatau ‘oku totonu ke tau fehu‘ia, pe na‘e ange fēfē ‘enau ma‘u ‘etau koloa? Ko e lahi ‘o e ngaahi koloá, na‘e foaki ‘e he hou‘eiki ‘o e taimi ko iá, ka ‘oku ‘i ai ‘a e ngaahi koloa lahi ‘oku ‘ikai ‘i ai ha fakamatala pau ki ai. Kuo mole atu ‘a e ngaahi taukey ngāue ‘o e kuohilí pea ‘oku hoko eni ko ha me‘a ‘oku ta‘efakafiemālie kiate au. Ka ‘oku tau malava pē, kapau na‘e lava ‘i he kuohilí ‘e lava pē he lolotongá ni. (Dyck)

Neongo ‘a e talitali lelei mo fakangofua ‘a e timi ngāué ‘e he ngaahi misiumé, na‘e kehekehe pē ‘a e founga ngāue (tu‘utu‘uni) ‘o e ngaahi feitu‘ú, pea mo e taimi ‘oku faingamālie ai ‘a e kau ngāue ‘o e misiumé. Na‘e ‘i ai e ngaahi misiume ‘e ni‘ihi mo hono tu‘utu‘uni makehe ki he fānau iikí. Koe‘uhí na‘e kau ‘a e ‘ōfetine ‘o Filipé, Dakota, ‘i he kau folau, ko e misiume pē ‘e taha na‘e ‘ikai ke ngofua ke hū ai. Ko e taha ‘o e ngaahi tu‘utu‘uní ko e tui ‘o e ngaahi kofu nimá ka ‘i he taimi lahi na‘e fakangofua pē ‘a Dyck mo Tohi ke na ala ki he ngaahi koloá ta‘e tui ha kofu nima tuku kehe pē ‘a e ngaahi koloa kuo fakatolonga ‘aki ha ngaahi kemikale. Na‘e toki fofola pē ‘a e ngaahi koloa faka-Tongá (fala mo e ngatu) ‘i he

hili ‘o e tāpuni ‘o e misiumé ke ‘ataa ‘a e ngāué, pea ma‘u mo e ngofua faitā ke ngāue‘aki ki he fakatotoló ka ‘oku ‘ikai ko ha toe ‘uhinga kehe.

Na‘e pehē ‘e Dyck: “Ko e fehu‘í leva, ko e koloa ‘a hai? ‘Oku mo‘oni ‘a ‘enau tala ‘oku nau fie ngāue fakataha mo kit- autolú, he ‘oku ‘i ai ‘etau totonu ki he koloa? ‘E toe fakafiefia ange kapau ‘oku lava ke mātā ‘e he Tongá ‘ene koloá.” Ko e polokalama ngāue ‘Amui ‘i Mu‘á/Ancient Futures, ‘oku ‘ikai ko e faka‘osi pe ko e ngata‘anga ‘o e ngāué ka ko ha makatu‘u ke toe hokohoko atu ‘a e ngāue ‘o e kaha‘ú. Hangē ko e fekolosi‘aki ‘o e hala manga‘onó, ‘oku ne ‘omai ha faingamālie ke tau laka ai ki mu‘a. Fakataha mo ‘ena mamahi‘i ‘a Tonga mo e ngāue faka‘ātí, ko ‘eku faka‘amú ke u hoko ko ha fakalotolahi kiate kinautolu Tonga ‘i he mala‘e ‘o e ‘ātí pea ke nau ako mei he kuohilí, ko e sio ki he kaha‘ú.

Translation by Alioth Helu

Dr. Seini Taufa is general manager for the Research Vaka within Moana Connect, a consultancy group committed to making children’s first five years the best start in life possible. Dr. Taufa has more than sixteen years of research, evaluation, and teaching experience at the University of Auckland. She is passionate about incorporating Pacific frameworks and worldviews into her work and is committed to elevating the voices of Pacific peoples in Aotearoa New Zealand and abroad. Her long-term goal is to be an effective advocate for vulnerable families, women, and children in Aotearoa through research that highlights the needs of these populations and solutions for their improved well-being.

Notes

¹ Kenneth Bain, *The Friendly Islanders: A Story of Queen Salote and Her People* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1967), 32.

² Epeli Hau‘ofa, “Our Sea of Islands,” in *A New Oceania: Rediscovering Our Sea of Islands*, ed. V. Naidu, E. Waddell, and E. Hau‘ofa (Suva, Fiji: School of Social and Economic Development, University of South Pacific, 1993), 128–29.

³ Keith St. Cartmail, *The Art of Tonga* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1997).

⁴ All quotes are from *talanoa* with Tohi and Dyck. Where not attributed to one artist, it is because the quote was a shared utterance.

TIFFANY BABINGTON

'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures: A Nuku'alofa Dedication from the New Zealand High Commission

Abstract

This bilingual greeting from Tiffany Babington, then New Zealand High Commissioner to Tonga (to 2022), acknowledges the weeklong symposium 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures held in Nuku'alofa, October 7–12, 2019.

Keywords: *'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures, Tonga, Tongan diaspora, Sopolemalama Filipe Tohi, Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck, art, exhibitions, community engagement*

The New Zealand High Commission in Tonga was delighted to support Sopolemalama Filipe Tohi and Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck when they brought the 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures weeklong symposium to Nuku'alofa from October 7 to 12, 2019. The symposium was a component of the larger project Ancient Futures: Late Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century Tongan Arts and Their Legacies, funded by the Royal Society of New Zealand's Marsden Fund. It enabled work on three continents toward the discovery and examination of ancient Tongan objects in museum collections and, significantly, facilitated communication and exploration between parties in Tonga and around the world. The symposium presented two days of knowledge offered by local cultural authorities, historians, and creative experts. Guests included an official visit from a German cultural delegation from Dessau, and a keynote offering by Dowager Lady Tunakaimanu Fielakepa. In addition to the presentations, the Me'a 'Ofa Gallery at the Tanoa International Dateline Hotel hosted the 'Amui 'i 'Mua exhibition of work by Tohi and Dyck, with a second group exhibition, *Art in the Dark*, demonstrating the passion and virtuosity of Tongan artists. For outreach beyond Nuku'alofa, Dyck and Tohi presented their experiences and knowledge at villages and secondary schools in Lapaha and Hihifo.

The symposium launch, funded by the New Zealand High Commission, was held at the Tanoa International Dateline Hotel. A demonstration of partnership

with the Tanoa Hotel Group and Creative New Zealand, artists, historians, and creative people from across the Pacific came together for the launch and symposium. This program presented multiple opportunities for local creatives of Tonga to share their art practices across numerous genres including visual arts, dance, performance, spoken word, film, drama, academic scholarship, and education with New Zealand-based colleagues.

The launch event furthered our commitment in the Pacific; demonstrated New Zealand's culture, values, and creativity; showcased Tonga's rich cultural traditions across its diaspora; reinforced our deep linkages with the Pacific Islands; and strengthened New Zealand's relationships with Pacific creative leaders and influencers including here in Tonga.

Na'e talitali fiefia 'e he Haikomisiona Nu'u Silá 'a Sopolemalama Filipe Tohi mo Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck 'i he'ena tū'uta 'i Tonga mo e timi 'a e 'Amui 'i Mu'á/Ancient Futures ki he konifelenisi uike taha na'e fakahoko 'i Nuku'alofa 'i he 'aho 7 – 12, 'Okatopa 2019. Ko e konifelenisi ko 'ení, ko e kongá ia 'o e polokalama fakatoto 'a e 'Amui 'i Mu'á/Ancient Futures ki he ngaahi koloa fakamea'a Tonga me'i he kongá ki mui 'o e senituli 18 ki he kongá ki mu'a 'o e senituli 19, 'a ia na'e fakapa'anga 'e he *Royal Society of New Zealand's Marsden Fund*. Ko e faingamālie eni ke fakahoko 'a e ngāué ni 'i he konitinēniti 'e tolu, ke fekumi mo vakai'i 'a e ngaahi koloa fakamea'a Tongá 'i he ngaahi misiumé. Ko e faingamālie ia ke fengāue'aki vāofi ai 'a kinautolu 'i Tongá mo kinautolu 'i he opé ki he 'etau ngaahi koloá. Lolotonga 'a e konifelenisi na'e lava ke vahevahe ai 'e he kau nimamea'á 'enua ngaahi 'iló mo e a'usiá pea mo ha ní'ihī kehe fekau'aki mo hotau hisitōliá mo e tukufakaholó. Na'e kau mai ki he konifelenisi 'a e kulupu me'i he *German Cultural Delegation* mei Dessau, Siamane pea mo Lady Tunakaimanu Fielakepa na'á ne fakahoko 'a e lea 'o e 'ahó. Na'e ngāue fakataha 'a e *Me'a'ofa Gallery* 'o e *Tanoa International Dateline Hotel* mo e timi 'Amui 'i Mu'á 'o lava ke kau ki he polokalamá ha faka'alí'ali makehe 'a Tohi mo Dyck na'e ui ko e *Art in the Dark*. Na'e fakahāhā heni 'a 'ena ngaahi ngāué mo e taukei 'o e nima mea'a Tongá. Na'e hoko atu 'a e vahevahe 'e Tohi mo Dyck 'ena ngaahi a'usiá ki he ngaahi kolo mo e apiako 'i Lapaha mo Hihifo.

Na'e fakapa'anga 'e he Haikomisiona Nu'u Silá 'a e konifelenisi ko 'ení 'a ia na'e fakahoko 'i he *Tanoa International Dateline Hotel*. Kuo ngāue fakataha 'a e *Tanoa Hotel Group* mo e *Creative New Zealand* 'o lava ke folau mai ai 'a e kau 'aati, kau tohihisitōlia, kau nimamea'a me'i he ngaahi fonua 'o e Pasifikí ki hono

faka'ilonga'i 'o e kamata'anga 'o e polokalama fakatotoló mo e konifelenisi. Na'e 'omi 'e he polokalamá ni 'a e ngaahi faingamālie ki he kau nimamea'a 'o Tongá ke faka'ali'ali 'enau ngāue faka'aati 'oku ngāue'aki ai 'a e founa kehekehe 'o kau ai 'a e tā valivali, ngaahi faiva, lea, ngaahi filimi, tulama, mala'e 'o e akó mo kinautolu 'i Nu'u Silá.

Kuo hoko 'a e kamata 'a e polokalama ngāue ke hokohoko atu 'a e fengāue'aki vāofi 'a e Pule'anga Nu'u Silá mo e Pasifikí pea lava ke vahevahe atu 'a e tukufakaholo 'a e Tongá mo e kāinga 'i he ngaahi fonua mulí, pea ke toe vāofi 'a e vā 'o Nu'u Sila mo e kau lavame'a he ngāue fakamea'a 'i Tonga ní.

Translation by Alioth Helu

Tiffany Babington was a senior diplomat for more than twenty-nine years, including just over four years as Aotearoa New Zealand's High Commissioner to Tonga. During her tenure, she was instrumental in securing and implementing New Zealand's response to the Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai volcanic eruption and subsequent tsunami, Cyclone Gita in 2018, Cyclone Harold in 2020, and the COVID-19 pandemic.

BILLIE LYTHBERG

'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures Conference, Tonga, October 2019

Abstract

The inaugural 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures conference held at the Tanoa International Dateline Hotel in Tonga (October 7–12, 2019) brought together artists, academics, and traditional knowledge-holders from Tonga, Aotearoa New Zealand, Germany, and the United Kingdom to consider how the future of Tongan arts can best be guided by knowledge of their past. This article details the program and associated events.

Keywords: 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures, Tonga, Tongan diaspora, art, material culture, exhibitions



Figure 1. Traditional knowledge-holders, artists, and academics at the 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures conference, Nuku'alofa, Tonga, October 8, 2019. Photograph courtesy of 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures conference

The inaugural 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures conference held at the Tanoa International Dateline Hotel in Nuku'alofa, Tonga (October 7–12, 2019), brought

together artists, academics, and traditional knowledge-holders from Tonga, Aotearoa New Zealand, Germany, and the United Kingdom to consider how the future of Tongan arts can best be guided by knowledge of their past (Fig. 1). The conference comprised a week of events supported variously by Creative New Zealand, the New Zealand High Commission in Tonga, the Tanoa Hotel, the broader 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures project, the Dessau-Wörlitz Foundation, and Ancient Tonga Nuku'alofa. It began on October 7 with an exhibition of works made by Sopoalemalama Filipe Tohi and Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck that were inspired by their access to international museum collections (Figs. 2–4). New Zealand High Commissioner Tiffany Babington officially opened and hosted the exhibition, which was installed in the Me'a 'Ofa Gallery at the Tanoa Hotel. The venue's hosting of the exhibition was a clear example of the commitment it is making to Tongan arts, one that is further evidenced by large-scale murals and sculptures by Tongan artists situated throughout the site.



Figure 2. Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck, *An obligation to fōnua*, 2018. Woodcut, relief print, and acrylic paint, 300 x 33 cm, Me'a 'ofa Gallery at the Tanoa Dateline Hotel, October 2019. Photograph courtesy of Hilary Scothorn



Figure 3. Sopolimalama Filipe Tohi, works in progress. Me'a 'ofa Gallery at the Tanoa Dateline Hotel, October 2019. Photograph courtesy of Hilary Scothorn

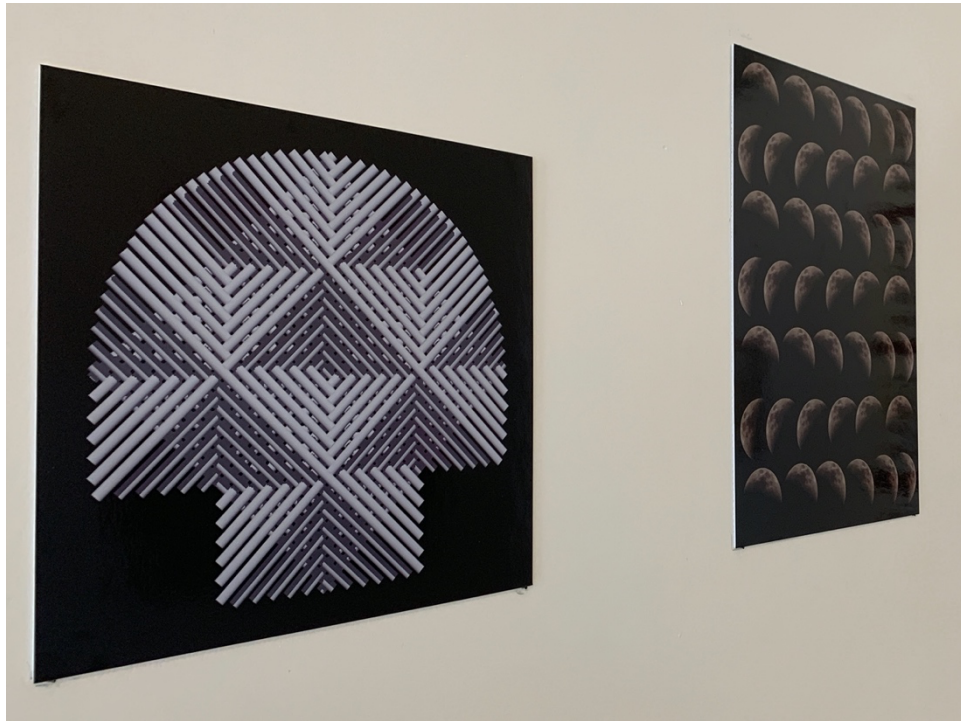


Figure 4. Sopolimalama Filipe Tohi, works in progress, Me'a 'ofa Gallery at the Tanoa Dateline Hotel, October 2019. Photograph courtesy of Hilary Scothorn

On October 8, the conference's second day, the 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures team gave keynote addresses: anthropologist and Pacific historian Phyllis Herda described the project, its aims, and its trajectory to date; art historian and organization studies scholar Billie Lythberg spoke on museum collections and singularities from Tonga and how to access these; Pacific studies linguist Melenaite Taumoefolau discussed Queen Sālote's artistry; and artists Tohi and Dyck presented their historically-generated artistic innovations. German curator Frank Vorpahl followed with an introduction to the "Welterkunder" Georg Forster on Captain Cook's second voyage and his assemblage of Tongan "curiosities." As no Tongan artifacts in collections can be confirmed as having been acquired prior to this voyage, artifacts from this voyage are considered the information horizon for the material culture of Tonga. Aotearoa-based Tongan artists T. K. Hards, Loa Toetu'u, Vea Mafile'o, and Emily Mafile'o gave the afternoon's presentations, and a panel discussion that also included Tēvita Lātu and Alisi Tatafu followed.

A report by the news outlet *Matangi Tonga* published after the day's sessions focused on the "many different ways of being Tongan" referred to by the artists and brought to the fore, in particular, by the Mafile'o sisters.¹ Vea Mafile'o, a filmmaker, and Emily Mafile'o, a photographer, both focus their creative and documentary lenses on the realities of their lives and those of their families and friends in Aotearoa and Tonga. A recent product of the sisters' combined efforts is *For My Father's Kingdom*, a personal and sensitive documentary examining their own family that has received critical acclaim since its debut at the 2019 Berlinale. During the symposium week, the film had its official Tonga premiere at the Tanoa. It was attended by the Honorable Sālote Lupepau'u Salamasina Pureau Vahine Ari'i 'o e Hau Tuita; 'Alipate Tu'ivanuavou Vaea, Lord Vaea, Chairman of the Tonga Traditions Committee; New Zealand High Commissioner Tiffany Babington; and local officials and dignitaries. The film was also screened in village halls and school halls throughout the week. Tohi and Dyck likewise toured villages with their artworks and presentations, manifesting the commitment at the heart of the 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures project: to bring Tongan arts, both made overseas and cared for overseas, back to Tonga. These events were reported on by local television stations and other media.



Figure 5. Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck (right) with keynote speaker Dowager Lady Tunakaimanu Fielakepa, 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures symposium, October 2019, Nuku'alofa, Tonga. Photograph courtesy of Hilary Scothorn

The first keynote presenter on the symposium's third day, Lady Dowager Tuna Fielakepa, is today widely acknowledged as a Tongan treasure (Fig. 5). A stalwart of the Langafonua 'a Fafine Tonga (The National Council of Women of Tonga), which was first established by Queen Sālote in 1953 to uplift Tongan women and their art practices, Lady Tuna gave a heartfelt address about change and continuity in Tongan arts. Brigitte Mang, the artistic director of the Dessau-Wörlitz Foundation, followed by addressing the history of the Georg Forster collection in Wörlitz and the various visits the 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures team made to it during their research. The collections manager at Cambridge University's Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (MAA), Rachel Hand, focused her keynote on the MAA's collections and community collaborations, which have included the 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures team. A suite of wide-ranging short talks—given by Tanya Edwards, Terje Koloamatangi, Tēvita Lātu, Tanielo Petelo, Janet Tupou, Stan Wolfgramm, and Benjamin Work—posed questions about Tongan creativity, the recovery of knowledge from museum collections, and ancestors' wisdom embodied in their descendants and held in *tapu* (sacred) landscapes and seascapes. Local hip-hop dancers of the Onion Squad, who had placed second in the International Hip Hop Competition in Auckland in 2019 with their distinctly Tongan dance

repertoire, brought vital energy to the stage. The day's program concluded with a second exhibition opening at the Tanoa, *Art in the Dark* (Fig. 6), which included works by many of the presenters, and the first night of the Nuku'alofa film festival.



Figure 6. Artists and supporters at the opening of the *Art After Dark* exhibition, Nuku'alofa, Tonga, October 2019. From left to right: Emily Mafile'o, Tanya Edwards, TK Hards, Terje Koloamatangi, 'Ahota'e'iloa Toetu'u, Ercan Cairns, Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck, Taniela Petelo, Tevita Latu, Andy Leleisi'uao, and Benjamin Work. Photograph courtesy of Hilary Scothorn

Thursday, October 10, included dance workshops offered by Sefa Enari, and the continuation of the film festival. Before Friday evening's film premiere, Terje Koloamatangi began a two-day *tātatau talanoa* (Tongan tattoo and deliberative discussion), marking skin with old and new *kupesi* (designs) and operating an open-door policy for conference attendees to bring their questions about the revival of this practice.

On Saturday, October 12, the Honorable Frederica Lupe'uluiva Fatafehi 'o Lapaha Tuita opened a new pavilion at Ancient Tonga, a Tongan cultural center in Nuku'alofa designed and built to house replica artifacts from the Georg Forster collection (Fig. 7). During their first visit to Dessau, the 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures team had been impressed by replicas of Tongan *'akau tā* (war clubs), a *tuki* (food pounder), and a *kali* (headrest) that were made in the 1980s, after it was discovered that the original artifacts were suffering from mildew; the replicas had

been intended for display in their stead. Robust, finely detailed, and with no risk of deterioration if they were handled without gloves, the replicas immediately inspired the Ancient Futures team to suggest the creation of a similar display in tropical Tonga, which currently does not have a state museum. The replicas were installed and the pavilion officially opened as part of the 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures conference. Frank Vorpahl and Brigitte Mang spoke with warmth and generosity about their experiences in the "Friendly Islands" and about the connection that the presentation of these replica artifacts to Tonga—a first for Germany—has instantiated. The Honorable Frederica Lupe cut the ribbon to the pavilion and received a tour of its exhibits, which also included fine mats, *ngatu* barkcloths, and contemporary *mosi kaka* (finely woven baskets made in the eighteenth century) woven by Lesieli Tupou. The international collaboration that facilitated the presentation of the replicas fostered new connections and the weeklong event wove conversations through the sharing of knowledge, building new and strengthening existing relationships.



Figure 7. Ofa Simiki, Phyllis Herda, Brigitte Mang, Frank Vorpahl, Sopolemalama Filipe Tohi, Billie Lythberg, and Dagmar Dyck with replica artifacts from the Dessau-Wörlitz Foundation Georg Forster collection at Ancient Tonga, October 12, 2019. Photograph courtesy of Martin Chaudhuri

Billie Lythberg is of Swedish, Scottish, and English descent. She is a senior lecturer in the Department of Management and International Business at Waipapa Taumata Rau|The University of Auckland and an affiliated researcher of Vā Moana–Pacific Spaces at Te Wānanga Aronui o Tāmaki Makau Rau |Auckland University of Technology. She has worked with Māori and Moana colleagues on multiple projects for the Royal Society of New Zealand, including the Marsden Grant-funded 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures project. She publishes extensively, curates and critiques exhibitions, and develops documentaries for broadcast television.

Notes

¹ Mary Lyn Fonua, “Creative Sisters Explore Different Ways of ‘Being Tongan,’” *Matangi Tonga Online*, October 8, 2019, <https://matangitonga.to/2019/10/08/creative-tongan>.

FRANK VORPAHL

Return into Pacific Lights: The German “Welterkunder” Georg Forster on Captain Cook’s Second Voyage and his Tongan “Curiosities”

Abstract:

This article focuses on two sorts of artifacts from Tonga that Georg Forster—a German naturalist and explorer of the late eighteenth century—translocated from Oceania to Europe. Forster traveled aboard Captain Cook’s ship Resolution on Cook’s second voyage (1772–75). During the voyage, Forster and his father, Johann Reinhold Forster, collected Pacific art objects, many of which made their way to Wörlitz, Germany. This collection was featured in a permanent exhibition (Georg Forster South Sea Exhibition) at the UNESCO World Heritage site at Wörlitz. A parallel installation celebrating Tongan art and material culture was established in Nuku’alofa, Tonga. This article follows the migration of Tongan objects to Europe and the cooperation which arose between the artists, curators, and academics involved in the ‘Amui ‘i Mu’a/Ancient Futures project and their counterparts in Germany. The resulting relationship was instrumental in the formation of the two exhibitions.

Keywords: ‘Amui ‘i Mu’a/Ancient Futures, Tonga, Georg Forster, Cook voyages, art, material culture, koloa, talanoa, exhibition, collections, Dessau-Wörlitz Foundation.

In 2007, while doing research at a museum in London, I was fortunate to encounter two drawings of Tongan creatures—of a red shining-parrot (*Prosopiea tabuensis*) and a Pacific hawksbill sea turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata bissa*)—that were nearly 250 years old.¹ Both drawings were by eighteen-year-old Georg Forster, who accompanied Captain James Cook on his first visits to Tonga: to ‘Eua in October 1773 and Nomuka in June 1774. Subsequently reading Forster’s rich and colorful travel report titled *A Voyage Round the World*, I became even more fascinated by Tonga—the land, its people, and their history and culture.² I traveled

again and again to these engaging islands over the next decade, making films, writing books, and organizing exhibitions in Germany about Forster's exploration of Polynesia.³

In October 2019, I had the honor of taking part in the 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures conference in Tongatapu, Tonga. On the same trip, I had the wonderful opportunity to open the Cook Forster Pavilion in Nuku'alofa, associated with the Tongan objects that Georg Forster and his father collected, and information they recorded, 250 years ago. The outstanding collection of Tongan artifacts the Forsters acquired are held today at the UNESCO World Heritage site of Dessau-Wörlitz, a small castle town in Germany.⁴ During this scientific and personal journey I learned many things, but most importantly, I got to know astonishing people. The staff at the Dessau-Wörlitz Foundation allowed me to bring back to light the surviving thirty artifacts the Forsters had collected during Cook's voyage: rare "curiosities" given to the Duke of Anhalt-Dessau, among them eighteen objects from the "Friendly Isles," as Tonga was called at the time.⁵

From 1990 to 2018, these ethnological objects were kept in storage to protect them from mold and insect damage. In 2017, as curator of the permanent Georg Forster exhibition at Wörlitz Castle, I was entrusted with creating the exhibition *Return into the Light*. I experienced immense support, not only to restore and conserve fragile artifacts from Oceania, but to involve people from Tonga, Tahiti, and New Zealand in the creation of a contemporary presentation of the Wörlitz Forster Collection and connect them with their ancestral culture.

Gradually, more people got involved, including friends and colleagues from Bremen and Munich. German ethnologists and anthropologists arranged meetings with the 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures project team: University of Auckland academics and artists who were researching late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Tongan arts and their legacies.⁶ Fortunately, the Ancient Futures team was already working in Europe when we began the revision, documentation, and cataloging of the Wörlitz Forster Collection. In September 2018, we had the opportunity to get together at the Wörlitz depository to inspect the time-honored pieces collected by the Forsters: clubs, bows, fishhooks, octopus lures, necklaces, ceremonial combs, bags, baskets, and other artifacts and instruments. After nearly 250 years, Tongans—artists Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck and Sopolimalama Filipe Tohi—were able to touch these objects, *their* objects. It was an emotional moment, as feelings we Germans never could have had surfaced. But we were able to witness it, to feel this strong connection, and were deeply moved.

I also had questions regarding objects in the Wörlitz Forster Collection. The barkcloth—was it really eighteenth-century *tapa* from Tahiti, as the old Wörlitz

catalog suggested, or could I trust my research and speak of it as Tongan *ngatu* ‘uli (black barkcloth) and *ngatu tahina* (decorated barkcloth)?⁷ The wooden pounder (*tuki*)—did it originate from the Society Islands, as the old catalog claimed, or, was it of Tongan origin (which Adrienne Kaeppler and Dieter Heintze suspected it was, and suggested after I emailed them photos of the piece)?⁸ By examining the objects in detail, the experts of Ancient Futures helped us attribute their provenance.

Half a year later, on May 5, 2019, Phyllis Herda, Billie Lythberg, Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck, and Andrew Mills were invited again by the Wörlitz Foundation to fly from New Zealand and the United Kingdom to celebrate with us the *Return into the Light* exhibition of the rearranged and restored Wörlitz Forster Collection and the publication of an up-to-date catalog. They also took part in an international symposium on Forster at Wörlitz, where they shared more of their knowledge with us.⁹ We learned that clubs (*‘akau tau*) were historically treated with oil in Tonga, while the ones in Wörlitz and other European museums had been kept strictly dry for nearly 250 years.¹⁰ Another discovery was that the Wörlitz *ngatu* was possibly a piece cut off of a larger barkcloth panel that the Forsters had gifted to Oxford University.¹¹ We were also interested to learn that in traditional Tongan society, women are the ones who convey ancient genealogical knowledge.¹² Most importantly, we learned magic words: *talanoa*, to talk critically yet harmoniously, and *tauhi vā*, to tend the space connecting people and other entities.¹³ An aspect of the generous and generative qualities of both is the idea of enriching social relationships by the exchange of gifts.

These wonderful Tongan concepts had inspired the project teams of Wörlitz and Ancient Futures while working together at the Wörlitz depository in 2018. The team noticed that some of the objects Forster had collected had been three-dimensionally replicated in the late 1980s by East German curators. These replicas were substituted in for the stressed originals on display, which were then preserved in climate-controlled storage. Sopolamalama Filipe Tohi came up with the idea of transferring the reproductions of these objects to Tonga, as they are both very true to the originals and made out of synthetics, which will last well in a tropical climate. In addition, he noted that, unlike the originals, the replicas could be physically handled—something that would be important to Tongans. The Wörlitz Foundation readily agreed to create another set of replicas for this innovative idea. In contrast to objects made out of fiber or tree bark, wooden (*toa*) artifacts in the Wörlitz Forster Collection proved to be suitable for the copying process; the created set consisted of a pounder (*tuki*), a neck rest (*kali*), and two finely-incised clubs (*‘akau tau*).

Two months later, in November 2018, Filipe Tohi and I met on Tongatapu to find an appropriate home for the replicas, which contained, in a visual and textual context, the entire story of the Tongan artifacts from the times when the Forsters explored the Pacific, returned to Europe with the objects, then arranged for their transfer to Wörlitz and, finally, their return to the Tongan Islands. Once again, I got to know people committed to the appreciation and understanding of Tonga's past, this time at the cultural village of Ancient Tonga, near Nuku'alofa. Ancient Tonga is a family-run business offering training courses in barkcloth making, tattooing, and dancing, among other skills. The owner and manager, Ofa Simiki, and her daughter, Jessica Afeaki, had made plans to create a small museum on their grounds, but this had been delayed by the devastating Cyclone Gita, which had hit Tonga earlier in the year. A handshake of trust between Ofa Simiki and me, witnessed by Filipe Tohi, affirmed our shared goal of establishing a Cook Forster Pavilion at the cultural village within the next year.

Six months later, the team at Ancient Tonga had erected a building to host the Wörlitz replicas—a place not only for locals and visitors to learn about Tongan designs created before encounters with European explorers, but also for young Tongan people to get in touch with, and literally touch, the archetypes of their ancestors. And perhaps, as intended by the outstanding *lalava* artist Sopolamalama Filipe Tohi, they would re-carve these beautiful ancient Tongan designs that so deeply impressed Georg Forster. As one learns from the information labels now in the pavilion,¹⁴ the young German testified:

The clubs of the people of this isle, were of an infinite variety of shapes, and many of them so ponderous, some that we could scarce manage them with one hand. . . . By far the greatest part were carved all over in many chequered patterns, which seemed to have required a long space of time, and incredible patience. . . . All the different compartments were wrought and divided with a regularity which quite surprised us, and the whole surface of the plain clubs was as highly polished, as if our best English workmen had made them with the best instruments.¹⁵

The delicate fabrication of a new set of high-quality replicas of the Tongan objects took several months in Berlin, but the process was completed just in time for them to be brought to the 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures conference in Tonga in October 2019. Brigitte Mang, director of the Wörlitz Foundation and curator of the Cook Forster Pavilion, and I were welcomed by the Ancient Futures project team at the Nuku'alofa airport. We felt that we were meeting up with friends—

that people from Europe and Oceania had become connected not only by the exchange of gifts but through friendship.

During the conference, we felt a strong interest in our efforts to intensify contact with Tongan culture.¹⁶ Panel members offered a multitude of ideas and inspiration for our work in Germany and for an ongoing cooperative relationship, including critical debate (*talanoa*) about the tough situation for museums in Tonga. This was prompted by a moving statement by Lord Vaea, a longtime champion of research on and conservation of Tonga's past. As the former chairman of the Tonga Traditions Committee, he claimed a serious reflection on the values Tongans attach to their cultural heritage in the modern kingdom.¹⁷



Figure 1. The presentation ceremony of Wörlitz replicas of Tongan objects to the cultural village of Ancient Tonga, Tongatapu, October 12, 2019. Left to right: Ofa Simiki, Phyllis Herda, Brigitte Mang, Frank Vorpahl, Sopoemalama Filipe Tohi, Billie Lythberg, and Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck. Photograph courtesy of Martin Chaudhuri

On October 12, 2019, the last day of an intensive conference week in which we had enjoyed critical, harmonious, generous, and generative conversations, a prayer was performed at the presentation of the Wörlitz replicas to the cultural

village of Ancient Tonga (Fig. 1). This transfer of objects from Germany to Tonga was then celebrated by traditional dances and short speeches.¹⁸ King Tupou VI's niece, Princess Frederica Tuita, honored the ceremony by cutting the red ribbon to open the Cook Forster Pavilion. The spirit of *talanoa* and *tauhi vā* flew high when the princess picked up one of the displayed Wörlitz artifacts. It was, she joked, the first pounder (*tuki*) she had ever held in her hands. Sopolemalama Filipe Tohi joyfully shared a ceremonial club (*'akau tau*) with the Tongan Minister of Tourism, who posed for Tongan and German TV cameras while Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck expressed a common aspiration of the Ancient Futures and Wörlitz project teams: that young Tongan people, college students, and artists-to-be get a chance to study the patterns of their past at this place. The *talanoa*—the ancient Tongan concept Dyck had reflected on so enthusiastically at Wörlitz castle—had reached fruition. Georg Forster had had similar thoughts. He called “free conversation” the true soul of enlightenment.¹⁹

Frank Vorpahl, a German historian, author, publisher, filmmaker, and exhibition curator, has studied Captain Cook's voyages for three decades, focusing on Georg Forster, the German Enlightenment thinker and naturalist on Cook's second voyage. After emphasizing Forster's critical reflections on the European “discovery” of the Pacific, he shifted his attention to Cook's Indigenous Polynesian pathfinders. He organized the permanent exhibition Back into the Light: Georg Forster and the Southseas Collection of Wörlitz in Germany, as well as a parallel installation celebrating Tongan art and material culture at the Cook Forster Pavilion in Nuku'alofa, Tonga. He holds a PhD in philosophy from the University of Kassel.

Notes

¹ Forster's drawings: Frank Vorpahl, *Reise um die Welt: Illustriert von Eigener Hand. Mit Einem Biografischen Essay von Klaus Harpprecht und Einem Nachwort von Frank Vorpahl*, ed. Michael Naumann (Frankfurt am Main: Die Andere Bibliothek im Eichborn Verlag, 2007), 274, 416.

² George Forster, *A Voyage Round the World* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag: [1977] 1989). It is generally agreed that Georg's publication is based on the journal of his father, Johann Reinhold Forster—see Michael Hoare, *The Resolution Journal of Johann Reinhold Forster*, vol. 1 (London: Hakluyt Society, 1982), 68 and Georg Forster, *A Voyage Round the World*, ed. Nicolas Thomas and Oliver Berghof (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000), xiv–xviii, xx.

³ Books and publications: Frank Vorpahl, “Der Seefahrer, Sein Chronist und die Entdeckung der Natur des Menschen,” in *James Cook, der Entdecker und Fragmente über Captain Cooks Letzte Reise und sein Ende*. Hrsg. und Mit Einem Nachwort Versehen von Frank Vorpahl. Mit Farbtafeln von Forsters Eigener Hand, ed. Frank Vorpahl (Frankfurt am Main: Eichborn Verlag: 2008), 151–73; Frank Vorpahl, “Georg Forsters Naturwissenschaftliche Zeichnungen in der State Library of New South Wales,” in *Georg Forster Studien XIII*, ed. Stefan Greif and Michael Ewers (Kassel: Universitätspresse: 2008), 275–89; Frank Vorpahl, ed. *Georg Forster: The South Seas in Wörlitz* (Munich: Hirmer: 2019); Frank Vorpahl, *Der Weltekunder: Auf der Suche nach Georg Forster* (Berlin: Galiani, 2018); Documentaries: *Expedition in die Südsee - Georg Forster* (1982); Exhibitions: *Georg Forster – Der Weltekunder in Wörlitz and Rückkehr ins Licht: Georg Forster und die Südseesammlung im Schloss Wörlitz*, Wörlitz Castle, ongoing, <https://www.gartenreich.de/en/exhibitions/georg-forster>.

⁴ The Wörlitz Forster Collection was given by the Forsters (including an items list) to the Duke of Anhalt-Dessau in 1775. It has never been distributed, shared, or exchanged.

⁵ Frank Vorpahl, “After Almost Two-and-a-Half Centuries, a New Perspective on the Wörlitz Forster Collection,” in *Georg Forster: The South Seas at Wörlitz*, ed. Frank Vorpahl and the Kulturstiftung Dessau-Wörlitz (Munich: Hirmer, 2019), 86–91.

⁶ Dieter Heintze, the former director of the Übersee-Museum in Bremen, and Hilke Thode-Arora, Deputy Director at the Museum Fünf Kontinente in Munich.

⁷ Ernst Germer, “Georg Forsters Polynesien-Sammlung in Woerlitz,” in *Georg Forster. Naturforscher, Weltreisender, Humanist und Revolutionär: Seine Beziehungen zu Wörlitz* (Wörlitz: Staatliche Schlösser und Gärten Wörlitz, Oranienbaum und Luisium, 1980), 61–92, 68–70, 90; Frank Vorpahl, “After Almost Two-and-a-Half Centuries,” 127–29.

⁸ Frank Vorpahl, “After Almost Two-and-a-Half Centuries,” 125; Germer, “Georg Forsters Polynesien-Sammlung,” 65, 90. Both Adrienne Kaeppler and Dieter Heintze reflected on the same example of a wooden Tongan pounder (*tuki*) at the Cook exhibition in Bonn, Bern, and Vienna; see the exhibition catalogue *James Cook und die Entdeckung der Südsee* (München: Hirmer: 2009), 194.

⁹ The combined Forster symposium of the Kulturstiftung Dessau-Wörlitz (Wörlitz Foundation) and the Georg-Forster-Gesellschaft (Georg Forster Society) took part on May 4, 2019, at the Gasthof Zum Eichenkranz.

¹⁰ Andrew Mills, an expert on Tongan weaponry, shared his knowledge with us during his presentation.

¹¹ Billie Lythberg, a researcher of Polynesian artifacts, made this very likely assumption in her presentation.

¹² Phyllis Herda, a well-known scholar of Tongan history, connected the findings of her gender studies in Polynesia with the transfer of ancient knowledge and genealogy in the Tongan archipelago.

¹³ In her presentation, artist Dagmar Vaiklalafi Dyck drew from her Tongan, Dutch, and German ancestry to relate the concept of *talanoa* and its different social aspects in ancient and present-day Tonga.

¹⁴ As curator of the Wörlitz permanent Georg Forster exhibition, Ancient Tonga entrusted me to curate the Cook Forster Pavilion in Nuku'alofa, resulting in a curator's gift of twelve fit-for-the-tropics images and information plates generously created by gewerkdesign, Berlin-based exhibition designers.

¹⁵ Forster, *A Voyage Round the World*, 305.

¹⁶ I gave a presentation titled "Return into Pacific Lights: The German 'Welterkunder' Georg Forster on Captain Cook's 2nd Voyage and his Tongan 'Curiosities'" on the opening day of the 'Amui'i i Mu'a/Ancient Futures conference, October 8, 2019. Brigitte Mang gave the presentation "On the History of the South Sea Collection in Wörlitz" on October 9, 2019.

¹⁷ Due to this situation, the Wörlitz replicas were given to *Ancient Tonga* as a permanent loan under a contract with the Wörlitz Foundation that must be renewed annually according to the ongoing condition and display of the objects.

¹⁸ Speeches were by Ofa Simiki and Jessica Afeaki for Ancient Tonga, Brigitte Mang for the Wörlitz Foundation, and myself as curator of the Cook Forster Pavilion.

¹⁹ Georg Forster emphasized freedom in thinking, speaking, and disputing in his famous German phrase "freie Ventilation" ("free conversation") published in his editor's preface for the first German translation of Thomas Paine's *Rights of Man*.

NICHOLAS BUTLER AND BILLIE LYTHBERG
Situating the *Amu'i 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures*
Exhibition at Pah Homestead, Auckland, 2021

Abstract

This visual essay situates the Amu'i 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures exhibition at Pah Homestead in Auckland/Tāmaki Makaurau with photographs of works by Tongan artists Sopolemalama Filipe Tohi and Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck, alongside loans from Canterbury Museum and Auckland Museum. Curator and collections manager Nicholas Butler presents an exhibition dedication and welcome in English and lea faka-Tonga to the homestead. Interpretative labels prepared by Billie Lythberg and Auckland War Memorial Museum for the loaned artifacts are included in this essay.

Keywords: *Amu'i 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures, exhibition, Tonga, Tongan diaspora, customary arts, contemporary art, Sopolemalama Filipe Tohi, Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck, Pah Homestead, Oceanic art, collections*

Dedication (by Nicholas Butler)

The Arts House Trust was honored to present the exhibition '*Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures*' at the Pah Homestead in Auckland/Tāmaki Makaurau. This was a special occasion, a major collaborative project between senior Tongan artists Sopolemalama Filipe Tohi and Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck and academic specialists (in the fields of anthropology, art history, organization studies, history, and linguistics) from Aotearoa and their international colleagues.

A major part of the research considered Tongan art objects of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries housed in international and national museum collections, with visits made to collections in Europe, United Kingdom, United States, Australia, and Aotearoa. The historic Pah Homestead (1877) was the first venue for '*Amui 'i Mu'a*' in Aotearoa. Architecturally, the Homestead belongs to an era in which ideas contributing to the development of the modern western museum were being extended into the far-reaches of the British Empire. It stands as an artifact of British colonial economic and cultural practice. Showing '*Amui 'i Mu'a*' at this venue is fitting in as much as the building itself echoes the

Royal Palace of the Kingdom of Tonga, built some ten years earlier, and has been recast as a gallery local to the South Pacific.



Figure 1. Installation view of 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures, Pah Homestead, Auckland, 2021. Left to right: Filipe Tohi, *Puleika*, 2021, acrylic on canvas, 120 x 79.5 cm; Dagmar Dyck assisted by Alexis Neal, Milania Cairns, and Nilesh Selwaswala, *Worn to Obey*, 2020, handwoven and sewn relief-hand-printed paper, 80 x 140 cm; and Dagmar Dyck, *Reflection of an Existing Order*, 2021, acrylic and spray paint on collage, *feta'aki*, and wooden board, 160 x 100 cm. Photograph courtesy of Raymond Sagapolutele

Tohi and Dyck have long drawn from Tongan tradition, be it *lalava* lashing patterns, *kali* headrests, *ngatu* barkcloth motifs, or *kiekie* waist adornments. Out of necessity, their earliest reference points were often catalogs and publications, rather than the presence of the things themselves. Their tours abroad, with their academic colleagues, prompted new apprehensions and new vision. Back in their studios, they were compelled to produce new work and a reconsideration of linkages with earlier works that respond to photographs and facsimiles.

'Amui 'i Mu'a is a project that has been formed with the Tongan community in mind and for all of Aotearoa to experience. We wish to acknowledge the

'Amui 'i Mu'a team and supporting partners (particularly the Royal Society of New Zealand Marsden Fund and Creative New Zealand). A further thank-you is for Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira and Canterbury Museum Te Whare Taonga o Ngā Pākihi Whakatekateka o Waitaha for their loan of Tongan artifacts for this exhibition.



Figure 2. Installation view of 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures, Pah Homestead, Auckland, 2021. Left to right: Nimafā Collective (Vea Mafile'o, Emily Mafile'o, Luana Dyck, and Dagmar Dyck), *Sisi Fale*, 2021, moving image and sculpture installation, dimensions variable; Dagmar Dyck, *Relishing the Splendour*, 2021, limited-edition screen print on paper, 95 x 65 cm; and Dagmar Dyck, untitled working drawings, 1994, gouache and pencil on paper, 37.5 x 35 cm each. Photograph courtesy of Raymond Sagapolutele

Mālō ho mo lava mai

'Oku fiefia 'a e Arts House Trust ke fakahoko 'a e kātonga faka'ali'ali 'oku 'iloa ko e 'Amui 'i Mu'a: Ancient Futures. 'E fakahoko eni 'i he Pah Homestead 'i Tāmaki Makaurau ('Aokalani). Ko e taimi fakafiefia eni 'a e lava ke ngāue fakataha 'a Soplemalama Filipe Tohi mo Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck ko e ongo 'aati Tonga mo e kau mataotao 'i Nu'usilá ni mo e opé he mala'e 'o e akó (*anthropology, art history, business studies, history, mo e linguistics*).

Na'e fakataumu'a 'a e konga lahi 'o e polokalama fak- atotoló, ki hono vakai'i 'o e ngaahi koloa fakamea'a Tonga mei he konga ki mui 'o e senituli 18 mo e konga ki mu'a 'o e senituli 19 kuo tauhi 'i he ngaahi misiume 'i 'Iulope, Pilitānia, 'Amelika, 'Aositelēlia mo Nu'u Silá ni. Na'e fuofua kamata ngāue 'a e timi 'Amui 'i Mu'a 'i he fale fakahisitōlia 'i Nu'u Silá ni 'oku 'iloa ko e *Pah Homestead (1877)*. Ko e fale *Homestead* na'e langa he taimi na'e fofoa'i ai 'a e fakakaukau ki hono fokotu'u 'a e ngaahi misiume 'oku nau kei tu'u he 'aho ní. 'Oku tu'u 'a e ngaahi misiumé ko e fakamanatu 'o e fakalalakaka faka'ekonōmika mo fakafonua 'o e Pule'anga Pilitāniá. 'Oku taau pe 'a e fakahoko 'a e kātonga faka'ali'ali 'Amui 'i Mu'a 'i he falé ni he na'e mei taimi tatau hono langá (ta'u 'e hongofulu ki mu'a) mo e Palasi Fakatu'i 'o Tongá 'a ia kuo hoko ko e taha 'o e ngaahi feitu'u 'iloa he Pasifikí.

Kuo ta'u lahi 'a e ngāue'aki 'e Tohi mo Dyck 'a e ngaahi founa mo e 'ilo mei he ngāue fakamea'a Tonga 'o e kuohilí 'o kau ai 'a e lalavá, kalí, kupesi 'o e ngatú pea mo e kiekie. Neongo na'e 'ikai ke na sio tonu he ngaahi koloá 'i he kamata 'ena ngāue, na'e tokoni lahi 'a e ngaahi 'ata mo e fakamatala fekau'aki mo e ngaahi koloa fakamea'a na'e 'osi pulusí. Kuo hoko 'enau fefolau'akí fakataha mo e kau mataotao he mala'e 'o e akó ke muimui'i ha ngaahi 'ilo fo'ou mo ma'u ai ha ngaahi vīsone ngāue. Na'e hoko eni ko ha fakalotolahi ke tānaki mai ha ngaahi founa fo'ou mo toe vakai'i 'a e ngaahi ngāue 'oku fenāpasi mo e ngaahi 'ata mo e fakamatala ki he ngaahi koloa kuo tauhi.

'Oku fakahoko 'a e polokalama ngāue 'Amui 'i Mu'a mo e taumu'a ke lave ai 'a e kāinga Tonga 'i Nu'u Sila ní. 'Oku mau hounga'ia 'i he ngaahi ngāue 'a e timi 'Amui 'i Mu'a pea tautefito ki he ngaahi tokoni 'a e *Royal Society of New Zealand Marsden Fund* mo e *Creative New Zealand*. 'Oku 'oatu 'a e fakamālō makehe ki he *Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira* mo e *Canterbury Museum Te Whare Taonga o Ngā Pākihi Whakatekateka o Waitaha* ki hono faka'atā 'o e ngaahi koloa fakamea'a Tongá ki he kātōanga faka'ali'alí.

Translation by Alioth Helu



Figure 3. Installation view of 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures, Pah Homestead, Auckland, 2021. Left: Dagmar Dyck assisted by Alexis Neal and Rona Osbourne, *Paper Strings*, 2015. Handwoven and sewn relief printed paper, 130 x 210 cm. Right: Dagmar Dyck, *M.A.P.S.*, 2020. Acrylic and spray paint on wooden board, 160 x 200 cm. Photograph courtesy of Raymond Sagapolutele



Figure 4. Installation view of 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures, Pah Homestead, Auckland, 2021. Fore-ground: Filipe Tohi, *Haufakalava*, 2001. Plywood (two parts), 40 x 43 x 130 cm and 53 x 50 x 50 cm. Photograph courtesy of Raymond Sagapolutele



Figure 5. Installation view of 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures, Pah Homestead, Auckland, 2021. Left to right: Filipe Tohi, *Fetu'u (stars)*, 2019, limited-edition screen print on paper, 82 x 61 cm; Filipe Tohi, *Māhina (moon)*, 2019, eight photographs on ceramic plate, each 42 x 42 cm; Filipe Tohi, *Fai-folau*, 1995, wood, steel, and paua shell, 175 x 57 x 26 cm; and Filipe Tohi, *Langi'olunga mo Langilalo*, 2005, plastic, 62 x 40 x 5 cm. Photograph courtesy of Raymond Sagapolutele



Figure 6. Installation view of 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures, Pah Homestead, Auckland, 2021. Left: Dagmar Dyck, *Markers of Community I & II*, 2020. Acrylic on *feta'aki* and canvas, each 102 x 78 cm. Museum loans as in other figures. Photograph courtesy of Raymond Sagapolutele

Barkcloth Loans from Canterbury Museum (by Billie Lythberg)

The Canterbury Museum loaned two Tongan barkcloths for the 'Amui 'i Mu'a/*Ancient Futures* exhibition at the Pah Homestead. Tongan barkcloths are traditionally made from the inner bark of the paper mulberry tree (*Broussonetia papyrifera*), known in Tongan as *hiapo*. The bark is beaten with a hardwood mallet on an anvil until its fibers spread to form supple sheets. Women usually beat bark alone, but fall into a rhythm with their audible, unseen neighbors. The ringing of their mallets and anvils creates a soundscape ubiquitous in Tonga; tapa beating ceases only on Sundays and during the observation of a period of mourning and is akin to the beating heart of the Tongan nation. Groups of women come together to paste their sheets of beaten bark into double-layered fibrous cloths. They decorate them with *kupesi* (motifs) commemorating important events, people, places, and things through naturalistic or figurative depictions and the important Tongan allusory technique called *heliaki* (to say or illustrate one thing but mean another).



Figure 7. Installation view of 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures, Pah Homestead, Auckland, 2021. Left to right: Filipe Tohi, *Haukulasi*, 2008–2009; nails and wool, 120 x 60 cm; Artists once known, *Ngatu Tapa'ingatu: Gramophones and clocks*, Tonga, c. 1922, barkcloth and natural inks, Reverend M. A. Rugby-Pratt Collection, Canterbury Museum E156.236; Filipe Tohi, *Pulefefine*, 2021, acrylic on canvas, 120 x 79.5 cm. Photograph courtesy of Raymond Sagapolutele

The chiefly variety of *ngatu tāhina*, called *tapa'ingatu*—in which the brown dye is used only on the raised designs of the *kupesi*, leaving the background of the *ngatu* unstained—does not appear to have been made since the 1960s. The *tapa'ingatu* in Figure 7 recalls and disseminates the appearance in Tonga of gramophones and clocks, which are clearly visible in its *kupesi*. Motifs such as these served initially to introduce new events or concepts, and thereafter to commemorate them. Through the incorporation of images into products of Tongan soil (beaten tree bark and plant-based dyes), formerly foreign concepts become Tongan. Some *kupesi* also offer Tongan versions of the names for new technologies, such as *kalamafoni* (gramophone), making them part of the Tongan language. This *ngatu* is sourced from the visit of Reverend M. A. Rugby Pratt to Tonga in 1922.



Figure 8. Installation view of 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures, Pah Homestead, Auckland, 2021. Artists once known, *Ngatu Tāhina: Figures and Trees*, Tonga, c. 1922. Barkcloth and natural inks. Reverend M. A. Rugby Pratt Collection, Canterbury Museum, E156.241. Photograph courtesy of Raymond Sagapolutele

The barkcloth in Figure 8 features anthropomorphized flying foxes and the *toa* (ironwood) tree branches in which they roost. Naturalistic motifs such as these did not become popular in Tonga until the late nineteenth century. This *ngatu* can be securely dated to the 1922 visit of Reverend Pratt. Flying foxes on Tongatapu, the main island of Tonga, descend from a pair presented in ancient times to the Tongan monarch by Sina, a Princess of Sāmoa. This important barkcloth celebrates these sacred flying foxes and, by association, the nobles of the villages in which the foxes roost; the Royal family of Tonga, to whom they belong; and the chiefly families of Sāmoa, from whom they were first received. This barkcloth is a section of a larger cloth. A similar piece in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York contains the same *kupesī*, differently arranged, demonstrating the extraordinary mobility of Tongan barkcloths as well as their international recognition as fine art.

Loans from The Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa and the Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira (by Billie Lythberg and Auckland War Memorial Museum)

The Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa and the Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira loaned five customary Tongan objects for the exhibition. *Kato alu* (woven ceremonial baskets) are made from the roots of the *alu* plant and *tu'aniu* (coconut midribs). The example in Figure 9 has a decorative motif woven in plaited coconut fiber. They have been made since the eighteenth century as significant items of exchange, and are often presented at weddings, funerals, and birthdays.



Figure 9. Left: *Kato alu* (basket), pre-1948. *Alu* (*epipremnum pinnatum*) roots and *tu'aniu* (*Cocos nucifera*, coconut leaf midribs), Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa and Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira, Oldman Collection, gift of the New Zealand Government, 1992 (1950.128/31539/ 534). Right: *Fue* (whisk), pre-1948. Wood and coconut fiber, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa and Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira, Oldman Collection, gift of the New Zealand Government, 1992, (1950.128/31530/539b). Photograph courtesy of Raymond Sagapolutele

Tongan *fue kafa* (Fig. 9) are among a repertoire of prestige items that are visual symbols of the social rank and status of their owners. Part of their efficacy

in demonstrating rank and status came through the way in which they were manipulated and performed, and relied upon the user's personal skill and bearing. *Fue kafa* had both mundane and sacred uses. In the hands of chiefs, they were oratory aids and their skillful deployment might prompt the remark, "Long has he used the *fue*"—indicating that he is an accomplished chief.



Figure 10. Installation view of 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures, Pah Homestead, Auckland, 2021. Far right: Filipe Tohi, *Sia Mataliki*, 2021. Acrylic on canvas, 120 x 79.5 cm. Other works as noted above. Photograph courtesy of Raymond Sagapolutele

The *fangufangu* Tongan nose flute (Fig. 11)—a chiefly instrument made from a bamboo cylinder sealed at both ends by intact nodes and often decorated with pyrographic motifs—is one of the oldest Tongan musical instruments. The name *fangufangu* is a reduplication of *fangu*, literally to sneeze, an act associated with vitality. The act of waking up someone from their sleep is called *fafangu*. There are records of chiefs being awakened by their guards and attendants with a tune from a *fangufangu*, so the act of awakening is also associated with this instrument. This definition was transferred to church bells used by missionaries to awaken their Tongan congregations, and later to all bells.

The Auckland War Memorial Museum describes the paddle club displayed in Figure 11 in this way: “The *pōvai moungalaulau* is carved from one block of *toa* (ironwood) and is deep brown in colour. The handle is cylindrical in shape and tapers out into an oval shape and furthermore into a paddle shape that is curved at the end and thin in depth. The entire surface of this *pōvai* is carved with geometric lines which are repeated throughout, the carvings are small and meticulous and would have taken hours of work to complete. *Pōvai* like this one were used by men and warriors in times of combat and warfare.”



Figure 11. Installation view of 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures, Pah Homestead, Auckland, 2021. Vitrine, top to bottom: *Fangufangu* (nose flute) with six holes and burned designs, pre-1948, bamboo, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa and Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira, Oldman Collection, gift of the New Zealand Government, 1992 (1950.128/31628/582b); *Pōvai moungalaulau* (paddle club), unknown date, *toa* (ironwood), Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira (1955.152.112/34226); *Pōvai apa'apai* (coconut stalk club), pre-1948, *toa* (ironwood), Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa and Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira, Oldman Collection, gift of the New Zealand Government, 1992 (1950.128/31863/512b). Photograph courtesy of Raymond Sagapolutele

The Auckland War Memorial Museum also provides this description of the *pōvai apa'apai* (coconut stalk club) in Figure 11: “*Pōvai* were used by men and warriors in times of warfare and combat. *Pōvai* is the general name for clubs in

Tonga, each *pōvai* has a specific name according to its make and purpose. This is a *pōvai apa'apai* or an *akau tā*, it is carved from one block of *toa* (ironwood), it is polished and dark brown in colour. In comparison to the other *pōvai* of its kind, this one is quite short. The entire *pōvai* has a diamond cross section, the handle is the smallest end, the club flares and tapers out from the handle in width and length ending in a flat top. The whole club is carved with geometric lines and patterns as well as human and animal figures. A significant chunk from the bottom edge of the handle is missing, possibly from use or damage to the club.”¹

Nicholas Butler is the curator and collections manager at the Arts House Trust in Hillsborough, Auckland Tāmaki Makaurau, Aotearoa New Zealand. He has a BFA in painting from Elam School of Fine Arts, a PGDip in museum studies, and an MA in art history from Auckland University. His master of arts thesis explored contemporary art and collective memory in Lebanon, with regard to the Lebanese Civil War (1975–1990) and the 2006 war. He has much working experience and knowledge in New Zealand contemporary art, with specific interests in photography and film.

Billie Lythberg is of Swedish, Scottish, and English descent. She is a senior lecturer in the Department of Management and International Business at Waipapa Taumata Rau | The University of Auckland, and an affiliated researcher of Vā Moana–Pacific Spaces at Te Wānanga Aronui o Tāmaki Makau Rau | Auckland University of Technology. She has worked with Māori and Moana colleagues on multiple projects for the Royal Society of New Zealand, including the Marsden Grant-funded 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures project. She publishes extensively, curates and critiques exhibitions, and develops documentaries for broadcast television.

Notes

¹ Information provided to exhibition by Auckland War Memorial Museum

HATESA SEUMANUTAFA

“Ngatu Led Me North”: Reflections on ‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures at Pah Homestead

Abstract

This article, written as a personal response, follows two ngatu (Tongan barkcloths) from Canterbury Museum to Auckland’s Pah Homestead for the ‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures exhibition, which showcased the interconnectedness of Tongan material culture, identity, and visual language. The exhibition, part of a five-year collaborative project, featured works by senior Tongan artists Sopoalemalama Filipe Tohi and Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck alongside museum artifacts. This personal response highlights how Tongan artists are reclaiming cultural heritage and reasserting Indigenous knowledge in museum spaces, forging new pathways for understanding and representation.

Keywords: ‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures, Tonga, Tongan art, Oceania, ngatu, barkcloth, Sopoalemalama Filipe Tohi, Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck, Tongan diaspora, customary arts, exhibitions, Tongan visual language, Cultural heritage reclamation, Indigenous knowledge systems, Museum decolonization, Tongan material culture, Pacific artists in Aotearoa, Ethnographic collections

At the start of 2021, the Canterbury Museum in Christchurch, Aotearoa New Zealand, made preparations for a *ngatu tahina* and a *ngatu tapa‘ingatu* (Tongan barkcloth) in the collection to travel north.¹ The two cloths’ destination was Pah Homestead, an art gallery in Auckland, where they were to be included in the exhibition ‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures. Though I had met the project delegation when they visited Canterbury Museum, where I am curator of Māori, Pacific, and Indigenous human histories, I knew little about the exhibition before I arrived on its opening night, where I saw both *ngatu* displayed among other manifestations of Tongan knowledge, visual language, and social systems.

Ethnographic collection items are skillful innovations resulting from a person’s or people’s political, social, and economic systems and practices. The management of such items requires a level of care historically overlooked but ever-increasingly practiced, prompted by members of origin communities, including their transnational *whanaunga/aiga* (family). There is a rising number of Pasifika

artists and scholars reexamining and recontextualizing museum objects, spaces, and records. Similarly, museums worldwide are not only unraveling the stories of Euro-American “exploration” and “great discoveries” to which their Pacific collections are attached; they are now systematically processing the unethical ways they have historically amassed their ethnographic hoards. Indigenous peoples’ access to their own heritage material has become a key aim for museums, which are increasingly striving to shed their colonial-laden systems and practices regarding community access.

‘Amui ‘i Mu’a/Ancient Futures featured works by senior Tongan artists Sopolemalama Filipe Tohi and Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck, alongside creations of Tongan manufacture carefully selected from museum collections across Aotearoa. The exhibition was the outcome of a major five-year collaborative project in which a team consisting of scholars—Billie Lythberg, Phyllis Herda, Melenaite Taumoe-folau, and Hilary L. Scothorn—joined Tohi and Dyck as they traveled worldwide to examine museum artifacts sourced in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century encounters between Tongan islanders and Europeans.

During their tour of museum collections, the *‘Amui ‘i Mu’a/Ancient Futures* project team encountered a sector-wide issue that museum professionals deal with daily: historic written records associated with Indigenous objects are often sparse, if not biased or assumptive. Well prepared, the team acknowledged and practiced Tongan values such as *faka’apa’apa* (respect) when approaching these records and museum staff. This created a shared sense of accountability, informing and guiding their multidisciplinary, multisensory examination of Tongan artifacts or arts, *nima mea’a*. The team’s experiences led to an exchange that ensured Tongan material was sighted, handled, and acknowledged once more under the gaze of their own. They exchanged more knowledge as they worked with host museum staff to reinstate Tongan names, related terminologies, construction techniques, and practices.

Tohi and Dyck have long been captivated by Tongan forms of expression. Finding solace, challenge, and realization in the cosmos of *lalava* (systematic lashing), the forms of *kali* (head rests), iconography within *akau* (clubs), and the texture and graphics of *ngatu* and *kiekie* (waist ornaments/garments), much of their early reference points were restricted to images in catalogs and publications. The opportunity to uncover Tongan objects around the world and spend time participating in their care can only have prompted an urge to create and share—to practice the continuum of Tongan visual language.

Sopolemalama Filipe Tohi was born in Ngele’ia on Tonga’s main island, Tongatapu. He immigrated to Aotearoa in 1978 and in the 1990s started exhibiting

and articulating a life philosophy through the practice of *lalava*. Tohi subsequently began developing *lalava* and its related aspects in sculpture, experimenting with stone and wood. He became increasingly curious about the possibilities of extending the mediums through which he could communicate the technological significance of *lalava* all around the Pacific. Other significant strands of inspiration for Tohi, reflected in his work, are the intricate *kupesi* (designs/patterns/formations) of *akau*. Carved to cover the entirety of paddles and clubs, *akau kupesi* reflect some visual components of *ngatu kupesi*. In either medium, an optical illusion is created by the highly ornate *kupesi* layer, a universe that cradles the suspended forms of animals such as birds and turtles, as well as people.

Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck was born and raised in Auckland, although spent many of her summer holidays in Vava'u, Tonga, developing and maintaining village and family connections. Dyck's visual language draws on Tongan textiles and fiber works. Her exploration has led to an unpacking of *ngatu kupesi*, *sisifale* (ornamental openwork apron), textured *kiekie*, and tightly woven and patterned *kato*, *fala*, and *helu* (baskets, mats, and combs). Her multimedia approach reflects the resourcefulness of Pasifika peoples and is enriched by enduring Tongan references.

For *'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures*, both artists extended their understanding and practices of Tongan visual language. They compiled their worldwide experiences, conversations, and discoveries into a formidable showing of Tongan ethos, knowledge systems, and cultural continuity.

Opening Night Reflections—March 16, 2021

Walking up to the Pah Homestead (Fig. 1) on the opening night of *'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures*, I became preoccupied with the building's distinctive features: its green grounds, manicured foliage, irregular facade, and superficial trimmings. The venue projects the architectural tastes of the late nineteenth century in its relaxed Italianate style. It was a fitting venue for this show; its mix of heritage and contemporary forms mirrors the makeup of *'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures*. It is located firmly in the Pacific and celebrates the creative endeavors of Pacific peoples.



Figure 1. The Pah Homestead, Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand, completed 1879. Photograph by Emily Chalk. Courtesy of The Pah Homestead

There was a queue on the steps at the main entrance. Inside, the noise of the crowd hit my sober ears and I started retreating. Then, to my right, I saw the blue and green hues of an ocean on canvas—wave after crashing wave until the rhythmically painted earthy lines aligned my senses enough to breathe. This was Dagmar Dyck’s *M.A.P.S.* (2020; see Dyck, this issue, Fig. 5).

Propelled forward to stand before the white expanse of hanging *kiekie* that is Dyck’s *Paper Strings* (2015), the noise from the crowd muted to a blur. I allowed the work’s monochrome hue to wrap around me until my mind found a stillness—so rare nowadays—and I smiled. A handmade clean slate. Fantastic. The busy blurred mass of the crowd separated into faces—people unknown but smiling and welcoming. At ease now, the noise morphed into sounds of laughter, music, and island conversations, beckoning me to explore *‘Amui ‘i Mu’a/Ancient Futures*.

The morning room’s feminine spread included Dyck’s *Sisi Fale* (2021) installed against one wall, with flowers no longer draped over picture frames as *lei* but allowed to float around moving images of preparations and creations (see Dyck, this issue, Figs. 3–4). Further along were her untitled working drawings from 1994: gouache and pencil lines—tentative but poignant—laid sparsely on framed paper, hanging like portraits of loved ones gone (see Dyck, this issue, Fig. 11).

I turned to meet a stone bird—Tohi’s andesite sculpture *Manuvaka* (2008)—sitting quietly on the wooden floor, fat with a knowledge of flight paths (see Tohi, this issue, Figs. 4–5). Long cut lines on the surface enhance its stable stature and its precise beak, brimming full, with much to tell.

There was an intended quietness about the spacious drawing room. Tohi’s sculpture *Haufakalava* (2001) sat so close to the wooden floor it was as if the

floorboards had formed into layers of hardened fibers (see Tohi, this issue, Fig. 1). Looking around the room, I saw that the *lalava* was revealed from different angles—abstracted and repeated in color, resized, and minimized under muted hues.

The little drawing room emanated warmth despite its fireplace being unlit. The glowing embers from Dyck's *Reflection of an Existing Order* (2021) made me stay there a while to warm up (see Dyck, this issue, Fig. 9). There was much to get through, and I had yet to even glimpse the *ngatu*. I reflected on the Tongan collection items that I care for as curator at Canterbury Museum and the significance of this exhibition in creating a platform to understand their position within a continuum of Tongan arts, and to represent them better.

I came to stand at the ballroom doorway. Both Canterbury Museum *ngatu* were finally visible. The *Ngatu Tahina: Figures and Trees* engulfed nearly the entire west wall of the ballroom. *Ngatu Tapa'ingatu: Gramophones and Clocks* hung on the north wall (see Butler and Lythberg, this issue, Figs. 7–8). These two *ngatu* document flying foxes and the *toa* (ironwood) tree branches in which they roost, as well as a prized gramophone and the clock on the Royal Chapel in Tonga. These barkcloths left the islands in 1922, two of eleven gifted to Reverend Major Albert Rugby Pratt. They had traveled well from Christchurch and were now in the right company.

The role of all artists, their ongoing practices, and their considered knowledge-gathering and sharing has become a vital layer in how museums can better engage and include origin communities in the managing and interpretation of their cultural material. *'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures* has been a robust initiation into how senior Tongan artists are engaging with historic *ngatu*, punctuating a Tongan arts continuum. With a number of contemporary Tongan artists excelling in varying mediums and modes, I look forward to seeing many more interpretations of Tongan ontology found in our local museums.

Hatesa Anoni Seumanutafa (Niue/Siamani/Sāmoa) is curator of Māori, Pacific, and Indigenous human histories at the Canterbury Museum in Christchurch, Aotearoa New Zealand. Her work focuses on connecting Oceanic innovative, scientific, and aesthetic heritage materials, practices, and knowledge with contemporary interpreters and educators. Her research priorities are provenance research for the museum's repatriation efforts, collections-based research toward identifications, restorations, records reconciliation, and developing best-practice museological methods.

Notes

¹ An earlier version of this exhibition review was published in *Art New Zealand* 179 (Spring 2021): 88–92.

**DAGMAR VAIKALAFI DYCK and
SOPOLEMALAMA FILIPE TOHI**

***‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures at the Hastings
City Art Gallery, August 5–November 5, 2023***

Abstract

This article explores the exhibition ‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures, showcasing the work of Tongan artists Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck and Sopoalemalama Filipe Tohi from the 1990s to the 2020s. New texts in English and te reo Māori were developed for the exhibition at Hastings City Art Gallery–Te Whare Toi o Heretaunga; this article reproduces them alongside photographs of the installation. The exhibition was part of a research project examining the legacies of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Tongan art practices. Dyck’s multimedia work reflects Tongan feminine textile traditions, while Tohi’s sculptures explore the ancient lashing technique of lalava. The overall project highlights how these artists, in collaboration with international scholars and communities, reclaim and repatriate Tongan knowledge systems encoded in woven, layered, and carved objects, bridging the past and future through art.

Keywords: *Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck, Sopoalemalama Filipe Tohi, ‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures, Hastings City Art Gallery, Tonga, Tongan diaspora, Oceanic art, contemporary art, exhibitions, museum collections, Tongan barkcloth (ngatu), lalava (lashing technique), koloa (Tongan feminine textile art), Indigenous knowledge systems, repatriation of cultural heritage, Tongan visual language, Pan-Pacific art practices, Tongan material culture*

In *‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures*, Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck and Sopoalemalama Filipe Tohi explore pathways between the past, present, and future in Tongan arts. The exhibition surveyed the individual work of Dyck and Tohi from the 1990s to 2020s and sits within an ongoing research project exploring the legacies of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century customary Tongan art practices. *‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a* developed in dialogue with a community of knowledge holders inside and outside the Kingdom of Tonga who seek to reclaim and repatriate the knowledge systems encoded in woven, layered, wrapped, and carved objects.



Figure 1. Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck, *Where we sit and gather*, 2020. Acrylic and spray paint on wooden board, 160 x 100 cm each. Photograph courtesy of Dagmar Dyck

Beginning in 2017, the artists worked with a group of international colleagues to interact with Tongan artworks held in public and private collections throughout Europe, the United Kingdom, North America, Asia, and Oceania. Following a previous iteration of this exhibition at the Pah Homestead, Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland, the ambitions of the project were expanded at the Hastings City Art Gallery—Te Whare Toi o Heretaunga in Aotearoa through a variety of artistic strategies and the inclusion of three *ngatu* (Tongan barkcloths) from the Hawkes Bay Museums Trust collection.

Tohi’s contribution to ‘*Amui ‘i Mu‘a*’ embodies his life-long examination of the ancient Pan-Pacific technology of *lalava*, a lashing technique used to bind materials together (Fig. 2). The artist engages with *lalava* as a poetic device for passing life philosophies from one generation to the next. For Tohi, the structure of *lalava* creates literal and metaphorical ties between people and culture—it aligns with the double helix of DNA, the blueprint for life, as well as the constellations in the night sky that have guided ancestral navigation. His works in this exhibition explore *lalava* patterns and the finely incised carving of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Tongan clubs to uncover what he refers to as a “fiber system” of knowledge (Fig. 3).



Figure 2. Sopolemalama Filipe Tohi , *lalava* made with *kafa* (sennit) lashing. Fale Pasifika, Auckland University, installed c. 2004. Photograph courtesy of Hilary Scothorn



Figure 3. Installation view of 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures, Hastings City Art Gallery—Te Whare Toi o Heretaunga, 2023. Foreground: Sopolemalama Filipe Tohi, *Haufakalava*, c. 2000. Plywood, 40 x 43 x 130 cm and 53 x 50 x 50 cm. Photograph courtesy of Dagmar Dyck



Figure 4. Installation view of 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures, Hastings City Art Gallery–Te Whare Toi o Heretaunga, 2023. Left to right: Two *ngatu* loaned from Hawkes Bay Museum Trust Collection (8073; 8084); Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck, *Treasure Cloth*, 2016, printed hand-pressed paper with acrylic, India ink, dye, oil stick, and pastel, 330 x 300 cm. Photograph courtesy of Dagmar Dyck

Koloa, Tongan textile art forms made by women (Fig. 4), have grounded the development of Dyck's multimedia practice (Figs. 1, 4–6). She investigates the objects that Tongan women have created with natural materials over centuries—the intricately coded patterns and construction methods of *ngatu* (barkcloth), *kiekie* (waist adornments), *fala* (mats), *kalo* (combs), and *kato alu* and *kato mosi kaka* (baskets). Dyck is interested in how meaning is generated through the circumstances in which these objects are created, used, or indeed gifted back within their communities. Her works consider how *koloa* are enmeshed throughout different facets of social life—from the everyday domestic setting to ceremonial occasions where these art forms express ways of relating to the environment and to each other.

Encompassing a multitude of art forms, relationships, and stories, 'Amui 'i Mu'a considers threads of connection that have sustained the Tongan diaspora over centuries, sharing knowledge and experiences to galvanize future generations.



Figure 5. Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck, *Seven Sisters*, 2016. Acrylic and India ink on archival relief printed paper, 41 x 420 cm each. Photograph courtesy of the artist

I roto i a 'Amui 'i Mu'a - Mā Muri a Mua, ka tūhuratia e Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck rāua ko Sopolemalama Filipe Tohi ngā ara o mua, o nāiane, o te wā heke mō ngā toi o Tonga. Ka rangahaua e tēnei whakaaturanga ngā mahi a Dyck rāua ko Tohi mai i ngā 1990 ki ngā 2020, ā, kei raro hoki i te maru o tētahi rangahau e tūhura ana i ngā whakareretanga o ngā tikanga toi o Tonga o te hiku o te rautau 18 me te ihu o te 19. I whakairohia a 'Amui 'i Mu'a i ngā whakawhitinga kōrero ki ngā pātaka kōrero o tua, o tata o Tonga, ērā i whai kia taumanutia, kia whakahokia ngā pūnaha mātauranga i rarangahia, i aparia, i tākaia, ka mutu, i whakairohia.

I tīmata i te 2017, i mahi tahi ngā ringatoi ki tētahi huinga hoamahi o tāwāhi me ngā mahi toi o Tonga e puritia ana i ngā kohinga tūmatawhānui, tūmatawhāiti ki Ūropi, ki Peretania, ki Amerika ki te Raki, ki Āhia, ki Ngā Moutere-a-Kiwa anō hoki. Hei whaiwhai ake i te whakaaturanga o mua o tēnei whakaaturanga i te Pah Homestead, i Tāmaki Makaurau, kua whakawhānuihia ngā awhero i konei mā ngā

rautaki toi rerekē me ngā ngatu (he papakiri Tonga) e toru i te kohinga o Te Whare Pupuri Taonga o Te Matau a Māui.



Figure 6. Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck, assisted by Lesieli Tukuniu and Mele Hemaloto, *Fringe Skirts*, 2016. Acrylic paint on builder's paper with pandanus and wool, 300 x 225 cm. Photograph courtesy of Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck

Ko te koha a Tohi ki 'Amui 'i Mu'a e whakaatu ana i tana rangahau pūmau i te hangarau Moana-nui-a-Kiwa arā te lalava, he tikanga aukaha kia rangitāmirotia ngā papanga. Ka whakamahi te ringatoi i te lalava hei ara tuku iho i ngā kura ora o tētahi reanga ki tētahi reanga. Ki a Tohi, kei te hanga o te lalava ngā hononga hāngai, ngā hononga huahuatau hoki i waenganui i te tangata me te ahurea – E hāngai ana ki te pūruatanga maurea o te pītau ira, te mahere o te oranga, tae atu ki ngā kāhui whetū o te pō i ārahi i te whakatere a ngā tīpuna. Ko āna mahi i tēnei whakaaturanga ka tūhura i ngā taura lalava me te whakairo ngao matariki nei o

ngā karapu o te rautau 18 me te 19 a Tonga e huraina ai, e ai ki a ia, he “pūnaha weu” mātauranga.

He momo toi papanga wāhine te koloa, ā, koirā hei tūāpapa mō ngā toirau nā Dyck. He mea tūhura e ia ngā taonga i hangaia e ngā wāhine o Tonga ki ngā rawa māori i roto i ngā rautau - ngā tauira kua āta tāia me ngā tikanga hanga ngatu, ngā kiekie (tātua), ngā fala (ngā whāriki), ngā kalo (ngā heru) ka mutu ngā kete kato alu me ngā kato mosi kaka. E ngākaunui ana a Dyck ki te whakaritenga o te tikanga i te wā e hangaia ana ēnei taonga, e whakamahia ana, e whakahokia ana rānei ki ngā hapori. I konei, ka arohia e āna mahi te hāngai o te koala ki ngā āhua-tanga o te whakahoahoa - ōpaki mai, ōkawa mai e āki ana ēnei momo toi i ngā hononga ki te taiao, me tētahi ki tētahi.

I roto i ngā tini toi, ngā hononga me ngā kōrero, ka arohia e 'Amui 'i Mu'a ngā taura here i toitū ai te iwi o Tonga i ngā rautau, te tuku mātauranga me ngā wheako e ihiihi ai ō muri nei reanga.

Te reo Māori translation by Te Ara Ripeka-Rangihuna
(Ngāti Porou, Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngāti Tūwharetoa)

Sopolemalama Filipe Tohi (b. 1959, Ngele'ia, Kingdom of Tonga) initially immigrated to Aotearoa New Zealand in 1978 and currently lives and works between Tonga and Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. The 2010 Art and Asia Pacific Almanac describes him as “Tongan art's foremost ambassador.”

I heke tuatahi mai a Sopolemalama Filipe Tohi (b. 1959, Ngele'ia, Tonga) ki Aotearoa i te 1978, ā, he rite tonu te noho, te mahi hoki ki Tonga, ki Tāmaki Makaurau anō hoki. Ko tā te Art and Asia Pacific Almanac 2010 ko ia te “māngai toi o Tonga.”

Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck (b. 1972, Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland) is an interdisciplinary artist and educator of Tongan and German descent. In 1994, Dyck completed a bachelor of fine arts and in 1995 she completed a postgraduate diploma of arts—both at Elam School of Fine Arts. She was the first woman of Tongan descent to do so.

Ko Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck (b. 1972, Tāmaki Makaurau) he tohunga toi, ā, he kai-whakaako nō Tonga, nō Tiamana hoki. I 1994, i puta te ihu o Dyck i te Tohu Paetahi Toi, ā, i 1995 i puta tana ihu i te Tohu Paerunga Pōkairua Toi—i Elam School of Fine Arts. Ko ia te wahine tuatahi nō Tonga ki te pērā.

BILLIE LYTHBERG

History, Culture, and a Tale of Two Queens: Exploring the *Ngatu* in ‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures at Hastings City Art Gallery Te Whare Toi o Heretaunga, 2023

with a Preface by ELHAM SALARI

Abstract

This article reproduces a gallery talk introducing the cultural and historical significance of three ngatu (Tongan barkcloths) from the Hawkes Bay Museums Trust Collection, which were central to the 2023 exhibition ‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures at Hastings City Art Gallery Te Whare Toi o Heretaunga. Ngatu, made from the inner bark of the paper mulberry tree, are integral to Tongan culture, functioning as both practical and ceremonial objects. They are used to mark important life events, including weddings, funerals, and royal ceremonies, and represent a material link between past and present. The article explores how ngatu embody Tongan time, where the present is a dynamic intersection of past and future. It also highlights how ngatu symbolized the deep connection and mutual respect between Queen Sālote Tupou III of Tonga and Queen Elizabeth II. During Queen Elizabeth’s visit to Tonga in 1953, lengths of ngatu were laid out for her, both in her honor and to contain her mana (spiritual power). One of these cloths later accompanied Queen Sālote’s coffin when she was returned to Tonga after her death in Auckland in 1965.

Keywords: *Tongan barkcloth (ngatu), Koloa tukufakaholo, Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures, Tongan cultural heritage, Tongan diaspora, tapa, barkcloth, museum collections, Polynesian art, Queen Sālote Tupou III, Queen Elizabeth II, mana, ceremonial objects, Tongan time continuum, Pacific art exhibitions, contemporary Tongan artists, Tongan visual traditions, royal pathways and rituals, Hawkes Bay Museums Trust*

Preface (by Elham Salari¹)

Te Whare Toi o Heretaunga–Hastings Art Gallery is the home of contemporary art in Hawke’s Bay, Aotearoa New Zealand. Located in the heart of Civic Square in

Hastings-Heretaunga, the gallery works with artists and local communities to grow creativity within the region, and to explore the role of arts and culture in the world we live in. The gallery, which opened in the 1980s, presents a lively program of local, national, and international contemporary art.

On a crisp Saturday morning in October 2023, Dr. Billie Lythberg engaged a captivated audience at Te Whare Toi o Heretaunga–Hastings Art Gallery with a talk that delved into the world of *ngatu*, Tongan barkcloths (Fig. 1). The talk was an integral part of the public programs accompanying the exhibition *‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures*, featuring art by leading Tongan artists Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck and Sopolamalama Filipe Tohi. Dr. Lythberg was an investigator on the Ancient Futures research project funded by the Royal Society of New Zealand, and co-creator of the Māori TV documentary series *Artefact*. Her talk showcased three Tongan bark cloths borrowed from the Hawkes Bay Museums Trust Collection as part of the exhibition. She also invited audience members to handle barkcloth and barkcloth materials she had brought with her (Fig. 2) to engage with the qualities of the *ngatu* on display in the gallery, which could not be touched. The talk wasn’t just about art; it helped to bridge a gap in information about the *ngatu* held in the Hawkes Bay Museums Trust Collection.



Figure 1. Billie Lythberg describing the barkcloths loaned to *‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures* from the Hawkes Bay Museums Trust Collection. Te Whare Toi o Heretaunga–Hastings Art Gallery, October 2023. Photograph courtesy of Te Whare Toi o Heretaunga–Hastings Art Gallery.

History, Culture, and a Tale of Two Queens: Exploring the *Ngatu* in ‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures at Hastings City Art Gallery Te Whare Toi o Heretaunga, 2023 (by Billie Lythberg²)

The ‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures project, supported by a Marsden Grant from the Royal Society of New Zealand Te Apārangi, brought together scholars and artists to investigate and interpret late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Tongan art forms and their enduring influences. The project examined Tongan and European exchanges of the period, focusing on both the historical and contemporary implications of these encounters.



Figure 2. Foreground: *Feta‘aki* (beaten paper mulberry bark), paper mulberry bark roll, *ike* (barkcloth beater), *kupes* design tablets and materials, and printed images displayed on a large piece of barkcloth. Te Whare Toi o Heretaunga–Hastings Art Gallery, October 2023. Photograph courtesy of Billie Lythberg

The exhibition ‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures included contemporary pieces by Tongan artist-investigators Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck and Sopolamalama Filipe Tohi, and was presented in Nuku‘alofa (2019), Auckland (2021), and Hastings

(2023). At Auckland’s Pah Homestead, the exhibition also included historic Tongan artifacts chosen by Dyck and Tohi from the Canterbury Museum, Christchurch, and Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira. In Hastings, the Hastings City Art Gallery (HCAG) Te Whare Toi o Heretaunga displayed three *ngatu* (Tongan barkcloths), also selected by Dyck and Tohi, from the Hawke’s Bay Museums Trust collection (Fig. 3). These additions enriched the exhibition’s contemporary works with layers of historical and artistic dialogue. This article reproduces a gallery talk, given in Hastings as part of the exhibition’s public programming, that introduced the material, cultural, and historical significance of *ngatu*.

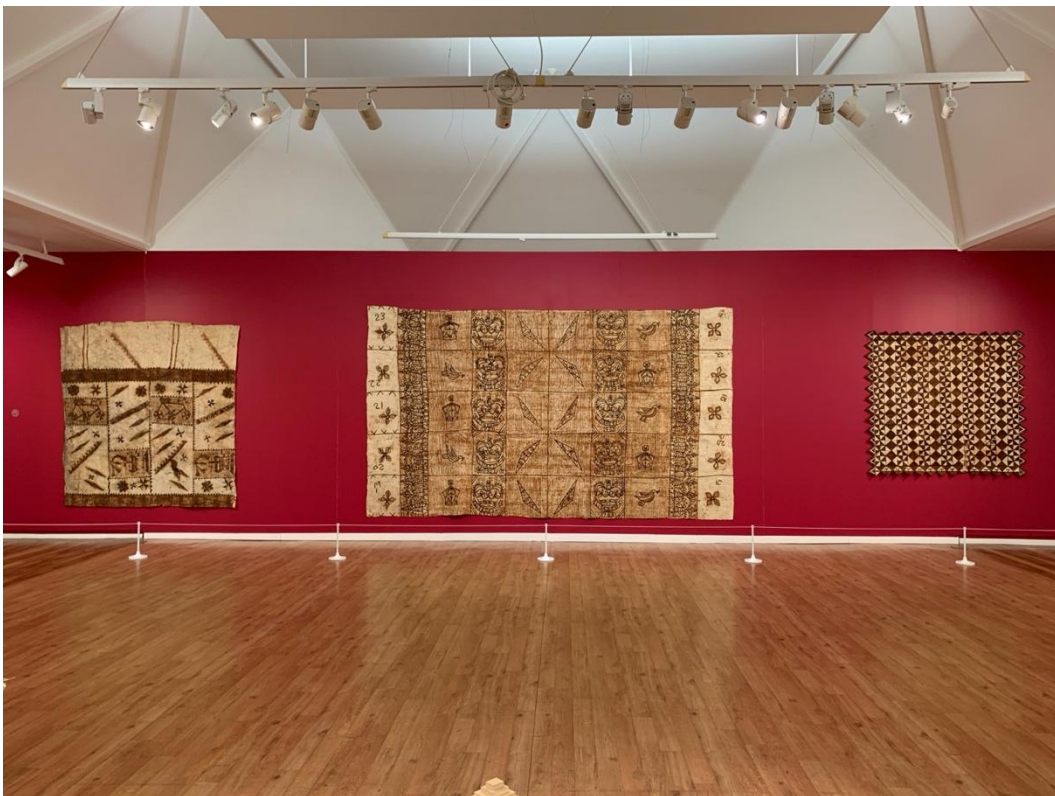


Figure 3. Installation view of *‘Amui ‘i Mu’a/Ancient Futures*, Hastings City Art Gallery Te Whare Toi o Heretaunga, October 2023, showing three *ngatu* (Tongan barkcloths) on loan from the Hawkes Bay Museums Trust Collection (left to right: MTG 8145, 8073, 8084). Photograph courtesy of Billie Lythberg

Tongan Barkcloths and Koloa Tukufakaholo: Wealth to Pass On

Ngatu are practical and ceremonial cloths made from the inner bark of paper mulberry (*Broussonetia papyrifera*, known as *hiapo* in Tonga) saplings. Barkcloths are

made throughout Oceania, and their prevalence across such a wide area is no accident. The paper mulberry is one of several plants referred to as a “canoe plant” because it was transported deliberately into the Pacific on oceangoing *waka* (canoes) from the Asian Mainland or Taiwan from about 3000 BC onwards. Its value is attested to by the care taken by the ancestors of Pacific peoples, some of whom we now know as Tongan, to ensure it survived their blue-water sailing so they could plant it in new homelands and continue to make cloth.

In modern Tonga, *ngatu* are made and exchanged at important life events such as weddings, birthdays, and funerals. They are an essential gift, along with fine mats and elaborate baskets full of scented oils and toiletries, often referred to as *koloa* (treasure), a term that has some equivalence with Māori *taonga*. These material items are part of the broader category *koloa tukufakaholo*, which translates literally as “wealth” to “pass onto someone.”³ This category includes both tangible objects, such as historic sites and artforms, and intangible aspects of Tonga’s cultural heritage including oral traditions, ceremonies, myths, and performative arts.⁴ *Koloa tukufakaholo* implies the transmission of these forms of cultural heritage through time and space, and from person to person or generation to generation. Both tangible and intangible *koloa tukufakaholo* are valued for their formal qualities (aesthetics expressed in terms of harmony and beauty) and their functional purposes (their performativity or utility) within Tongan society.

Ngatu exemplifies the literal meaning of *koloa tukufakaholo* in that, as a material object with a specific function as a “gift”—in a Tongan context—it is literally wealth to be passed on. *Ngatu* are also associated with oral traditions and proverbs that describe or allude to their materiality and use. *Ngatu* barkcloths convey meaning through their forms, colors, and motifs, and they are ranked or valued differently through these.

The way that Tongans conceptualize *koloa tukufakaholo* differs from a Western museological model in that Tongans emphasize the maintenance or preservation of intangible cultural heritage over and above the preservation of its tangible manifestations. While museums preserve objects like *ngatu*, Tongans keep making them and being inspired by them; the exhibition at Hastings City Art Gallery is testament to this process. Tongans continue to make *ngatu* and use them in accordance with a Tongan time continuum, in which the present is conceived as the dynamic conjunction of past and future. As anthropologist and historian Hūfanga ‘Okusitino Māhina explains, “In Tonga, it is thought that, concurrently, people walk forward into the past, and walk backward into the future, where the allegedly unchanging past and indefinable yet-to-happen future

are historically altered and culturally ordered in the tensional, ever-moving present.”⁵

It is within this notion of the Tongan time continuum that the lineage of *ngatu* is located, linking even the most contemporary *ngatu* to the first *hiapo* saplings carried to Tonga by Polynesian ancestors. But as Māhina cautions, “the onus of preserving the past and mapping the future—whether [it] be for culture’s sake, humanity or future generations—rests squarely on our shoulders in the present.”⁶ In part, this responsibility must be borne by the museums that care for *koloa* and by the galleries that bring them out into the light. The enduring significance of *koloa* such as *ngatu* is illuminated by contemporary artists and scholars, including Sopolomalama Filipe Tohi and Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck, who urge us to look closely at historic examples in order to see their legacies in contemporary art practices.

Managing Relationships with Barkcloth

Beyond their significance as treasured textiles, circulation as gifts, and exhibition in gallery and museum contexts, barkcloths are also creative technologies that manage transitions across thresholds—often quite literally; *ngatu* are used as wrappings and ground coverings because they can defuse and contain *mana*, or the potency of people. The journals of eighteenth-century European expeditions record exchanges that were marked with barkcloth for this reason, often in enormous quantities.

There is an example of this at the Museo de America in Madrid: a large *ngatu* known as “Malaspina’s carpet.”⁷ During the visit of Alessandro Malaspina to Vava’u in 1793, there was a fracas and several shots were fired by his men. A shipboard journal records that the next time Malaspina’s crew came ashore, a huge carpet made of barkcloth was laid out for them to walk and sit upon.⁸ This was a particularly Tongan way of managing tension. After this trouble-free visit, the thirty-meter-long *ngatu*, and the *mana* it had absorbed, was bundled up and gifted to the Spanish to take away.

Huge lengths of barkcloth are also laid out to honor people of great *mana*. It is purported that the feet of Queen Sālote, the most beloved of Tonga’s monarchs, never touched Tongan soil, and she afforded Queen Elizabeth II the same treatment in 1953. *Ngatu* was laid out to honor the British monarch, but also to contain her *mana*, which I will discuss in detail below. A large section of one of

these cloths honoring Queen Elizabeth (Fig. 4) was central to the Hastings City Art Gallery Te Whare Toi o Heretaunga showing of 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures.

Making Barkcloth

The making of huge Tongan barkcloths involves three basic steps. The inner bark of the paper mulberry is removed from carefully cultivated saplings and beaten with a wooden mallet against a long wooden anvil to spread the fibers into thin strips that are pasted together into sheets of *feta'aki* (single-layered plain, undyed barkcloth). This is individual work, with a percussive quality that helps to mark Tongan time (see Butler and Lythberg, this issue).



Figure 4. *Ngatu* section of five *langanga* (barkcloth sections), Tonga, c. 1953. Hawkes Bay Museums Trust Collection (MTG 8073). Hastings City Art Gallery, October 2023. Photograph courtesy of Billie Lythberg

Next, women come together to work at a *papa koka'anga*, a barkcloth-making bench, across which layers of *feta'aki* are pasted together at right angles to one another using parboiled starchy root vegetables.⁹ They are simultaneously rubbed with tree-bark dyes or a red clay (*umea*) over raised patterns called *kupesi*, and the initial decoration emerges.¹⁰ I describe some commonly used *kupesi* in detail in the next section. This process is called a *koka'anga*, “the doing of *koka*,” referring to one of the tree-bark dyes—hence *papa koka'anga* describes a “bench [for] the doing of *koka*.” This is collaborative work, accompanied by singing and the smells of vegetal dyes and pastes. When it is complete, the cloth is laid out in the sun to dry.

After it has dried, the cloth is given to one of the women who made it; she does the final stage of *ngatu* decoration by overpainting the patterns with coconut oil. This seals the surface of the barkcloth, while also imparting both shine (*ngingila*) and scent. The significance of these perfumes is sometimes indexed by *kupesi* motifs in the style of flowers or garlands.

The women who come together to *koka'anga* take turns receiving completed cloths and using them for their gifting obligations in Tonga's highly stratified and ranked gift economy. To appropriately make and bestow a *ngatu* is to demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of Tongan society and its organizational symbolism. In gift contexts, *kupesi* are vitally important.

The Significance of Kupesi Design Templates to Ngatu and Women's Working Groups

The *kupesi tui* (embroidered tablets) now predominantly used in the creation of Tongan barkcloth are made with a two-layer base consisting of pandanus leaves (*paongo*) and the suede-like outer sheath of coconut leaves (*kaka*). Sometimes the pandanus leaf is uppermost, and the *kaka* provides a thick, supportive base; other times this structure is reversed. The patterns are created by stitching coconut leaf midribs called *tuaniu* or *tu'a niu*, to the layered tablet to form a design.¹¹ The midribs are sometimes further embellished by winding threads of coconut fiber (*kaleve'i pulu*) around them before attaching them to the substrate. Dried midribs are used to create straight lines, and fresh midribs are used for pliable, curved lines. They are stitched together using hibiscus fiber (*fau*), coconut fiber, or thread

and modern needles. Embroidered *kupesi* made in this way are remarkably resilient, long-lasting, and can be used to produce both geometric and naturalistic motifs.

Kupesi are a central component of the *koka'anga*. They are the rubbing tablets and relief patterns placed directly on the *papa koka'anga*. The process of joining pieces of *feta'aki* upon the *papa koka'anga* and rubbing over them with dye causes the raised patterns of the *kupesi* to be printed into the barkcloth. The word *kupesi* is used for both the design tablets placed upon the *papa koka'anga* and the patterns or motifs they produce in the *ngatu* made upon it.

Kupesi tui are the most commonly used *kupesi* templates in Tonga today. The embroidered tablets are highly valued, as they represent not only the time used to make them, but also the potential to create numerous *ngatu* from them over their lifetime, which may span twenty or more years. There is potential for individual *kupesi* to be put together into different sets to make *ngatu* with different appearances. The value of *kupesi tui* is encoded in the proverb: “*Hangē ha fakatau kupesi*” (“like buying a *kupesi*”).¹² This describes the difficulty of parting with priceless things, implying that *kupesi* are so precious they will not usually be offered for sale. The value of *kupesi* underlines the importance of *tauhi kupesi*, or caring for *kupesi*. The word “*tauhi*” is the same as used in the conjunction *tauhi fanau*, which means “to care for a child.”¹³

Prior to the implementation of the Tongan Constitution in 1875, the making of *kupesi* had been the sole domain of chiefly women and included designs applied directly to the *papa koka'anga* with sophisticated wrapping of cordage, literally tying up a *papa koka'anga* with one geometric design, sometimes for extended periods.¹⁴ Part One of the Tongan Constitution, the declaration of rights, freed Tongans to “use their lives and persons and time to acquire and possess property and to dispose of their labour and the fruit of their hands and to use their own property as they will,” effectively emancipating commoners from servitude. Following this political change, when the dynamics of *ngatu* production shifted away from the control of the chiefly women, commoner women gradually took on the role of preparing *kupesi*, largely choosing to expand the repertoire of the portable *kupesi tui* tablets. The potential to make curved lines, and therefore more naturalistic designs, using these embroidered *kupesi* tablets greatly expanded the potential imagery of the *kupesi* maker, stimulating “an artistic efflorescence that might not have occurred without them.”¹⁵

Kupesi Designs and Heliaki

Tongan people believe that “*ngatu* or *tapa* cloth is like a history book to those who understand it. Each stencil or *kupesi* tells of something that has happened in the past.”¹⁶ Thus, every *kupesi* is a potential pathway to deeper understanding or historical documentation. A key feature of the *kupesi* used to decorate *ngatu* is the concept of *heliaki*, often translated as “metaphor.” The similarities a metaphor transfers between two concepts, and the tension this transference creates between literal and figurative meanings, are only productive when linguistic and cultural awareness precede them.

In a Tongan context, *heliaki* inflects poetry, oratory, visual arts, and performance; manages relationships between people and groups; and balances privileges and responsibilities. Without the ongoing transfer of knowledge, the meanings and significance of Tongan cultural items such as decorated barkcloths becomes opaque.



Figure 5. *Ngatu*, Tonga, mid- to late twentieth century, Hawkes Bay Museums Trust Collection (MTG 8084). Hastings City Art Gallery, October 2023. Photograph courtesy of Billie Lythberg

Kupesi and the Ngatu from the Hawkes Bay Museums Trust Collection

There are several themes within the *kupesi tui* that are evident in the barkcloths loaned for the 'Amui 'i Mu'a/Ancient Futures exhibition. One of the barkcloths on display is a decorative piece likely made for a special event, its edges specially cut into triangle points for aesthetic appeal (Fig. 5). Its rhythmic *kupesi* depict *man-ulua* (two birds)—a *heliaki* for the coming together of two people of equivalent rank. It is possible—though impossible to be certain—this barkcloth was used at a wedding or other important ceremony, perhaps as a covering for a table or dais.



Figure 6. *Ngatu* section, Tonga, c. 1920. Hawkes Bay Museums Trust Collection (MTG 8145). Hastings City Art Gallery, October 2023. Photograph courtesy of Billie Lythberg

Some *kupesi tui* record historical events, such as the visibility of Halley's comet in 1910, Tonga's purchase of a fighter jet toward the efforts of the Allied forces during World War II, the first seaplane to visit Tonga, and Queen Elizabeth II's visit to Tonga in 1953.¹⁷ Some encode the significance of Tonga's first public buildings, such as churches and concrete water towers, and others record the appearance in Tonga of Western material culture such as guitars.¹⁸

These sorts of *kupesi* serve both to introduce new events or concepts and to commemorate them; there do not appear to be any *kupesi* that record desires or aspirations for things. One explanation for the appearance of technologies new to Tonga on Tongan barkcloth is that through the incorporation of such images into products from Tongan soil, specifically *feta'aki* and plant-based dyes, formerly foreign concepts become Tongan. Niuean artist John Pule has described this rather poetically in relation to Niuean *hiapo* (barkcloth): "The mixing of Niuean and European imagery sometimes appears unsure about the fibrous nature of growth, but when painted some images became immersed in the bark's property, exposing it to the soil's saliva. This area of soil is present in every *hiapo*."¹⁹ This is especially relevant to those *kupesi* that also record Tongan versions of the names for these objects, such as "*Koe Kalamafoni*" ("this is a gramophone") making them part of the Tongan *fonua* (land). Inscriptions like this add to the significance of the motif illustrated and may be used to name certain *kupesi* that are commonly used together in the sets known as *kupesi hingoa* (named *kupesi*). One function of *kupesi hingoa* is to make new things familiar. The barkcloth segment in Figure 6, cut from a larger cloth made circa 1920 (and see similar in Butler & Lythberg, this issue), depicts two bicycles and two elaborate gramophones, and is a terrific example of the "making Tongan" of foreign objects.

Arguably the most prevalent function of the *kupesi hingoa* in use today is to allude to the nobles and royal families of Tonga. Individual *kupesi tui* include representations of animals and fish that are *heliaki* for the villages with which they are associated, such as the flying foxes of Hihifo and Kolovai.²⁰ Specific types of foliage and the garlands made from them also encode associations with certain villages; for example, the *mapa* fruit is associated with the village of Pelehake. The *kupesi hingoa* set known as *hala paini* is the most common one in use today.²¹ It combines images of the pine trees lining the road to the royal palace in Nuku'alofa (*hala paini* translates as "pine pathway") with the *sila* (seal) of Tonga. Accompanying the *sila* there is usually a lion adapted from European representations of monarchy, alluding to King Tupou I, and an eagle representing the United States but also alluding to the Tongan state.²² When *kupesi* such as these are used, it

does not necessarily mean that the *ngatu* is being made for the person to whom the *kupesi hingoa* refers; rather, it acknowledges their continued importance in Tongan society and associates the *ngatu* with their status.

The very best *ngatu* are made from smooth white *feta'aki* that have been pasted together to make a smooth cloth and decorated with well-colored dyes. The *kupesi* used are chosen to provoke an emotional response, such as those that allude to the history and prowess of the Tongan monarchy. The *kupesi* and the space-dividing lines between them are laid out carefully, and the lines are straight. The *tohi* or overpainting is carefully performed and aligns well with the *kupesi*. The *ngatu* will have "scale," being preferably large and complete (i.e., not cut into sections). In addition, if the *ngatu* is to be gifted, it will be of an appropriate type, with appropriate *kupesi*, for the recipient and the occasion, and finally, if it is a gift, it will be well presented.

This final characteristic is very important. As anthropologist Nicholas Thomas reminds us,

barkcloths are not solely, or not exactly, works of art: the terminological debate is ultimately unproductive, but it is important to remember that these were not made for aesthetic appreciation in a narrow sense, but rather to constitute sanctity, to define a ceremony, to wrap around a body, to bear knowledge or to effect a gift. These art forms were embedded in the lives of Pacific Islanders and in many places, and in many ways, they still are.²³

Three-Dimensional Works of Art

The way *ngatu* is presented demonstrates what performance and museum studies scholar Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett has called "the location of authenticity in a moment of aesthetic reception."²⁴ *Ngatu* takes on heightened significance and a certain three-dimensionality when presented in carefully folded bundles of *koloa*, as rippling sheets held high by lines of women, or covering enormous pathways. Art historian Jehanne Teilhet-Fisk described the aesthetic reception of a large *ngatu* presented in a performative way:

The continuous, repetitive patterns are meant to be viewed from a distance and to heighten the appearance of length as a thirty-five-to seventy-foot tapa oscillates and trembles in the hands of the

women presenting it in a ceremonial context. Tapa's two-dimensional medium is transposed into a floating three-dimensional sculpture, a kind of performance piece that is meant to be experienced in its entirety.²⁵

Likewise, when *ngatu* and other textile *koloa* are wrapped around individuals to prepare them for marriage and other important life events, the individual body is transformed into a representation of collectivity and they “represent more than their individual selves . . . formed into embodiments of their respective *kainga*'s [kindred's] history, wealth, value, potency, knowledge of tradition and ability to generate resources.”²⁶

Ngatu are not merely two-dimensional artforms, as they are often displayed in Western galleries but have the capacity to wrap, contain, and transform space, as they are folded, unfolded, spread out on the ground, and wrapped around bodies. They are malleable textiles with sculptural and transformative potential and applications.

Ngatu Pathways to Honor Two Queens

Returning to the *ngatu* made for the visit of Queen Elizabeth II to Tonga in 1953 (Fig. 4), pathways formed by *ngatu* are most significant when they are constructed for members of the royal family, and the collective effort is evident in the *ngatu* laid out by Tongans to protect and respect the monarchy. Lengths of *ngatu* have long been used to line pathways for members of the royal family to walk along, even for their cars to drive along. This is a way of honoring the family and containing its *mana* and *tapu* (“sacredness”), keeping the road safe to walk on afterwards.²⁷ For the visit of Queen Elizabeth II to Tonga in 1953, *ngatu* was prepared in great quantities to cover the paths along which she and Queen Sālote walked. According to Kenneth Bain, former secretary to the government of Tonga, “Each village of Tongatapu made fifty yards of *tapa* [*ngatu*] . . . in all there was over a mile of *tapa*.”²⁸ Afterwards, the *ngatu* were divided into small pieces and given to the British sailors at Queen Sālote's instruction, as a sign of respect for Queen Elizabeth II, whose exalted status was acknowledged and appreciated by Queen Sālote.²⁹ Because the monarchs had walked on these *ngatu* and exposed them to their *mana*, the *ngatu* could not be allowed to circulate in the Tongan gift economy, but by their division and distribution this *mana* could be safely contained and distributed, and the exalted status of the queens preserved. In significant

ways, this process recalled the presentation of “Malaspina’s carpet” 160 years prior.

The section of this *ngatu*, now in the Hawke’s Bay Museum Trust Collection, is five *langanga* (barkcloth sections) cut from a piece that was likely a *launima* (fifty *langanga* long). The *langanga* are numbered—“19” through “23”—on the borders of the cloth. The *kupesi* depict the crown of Queen Sālote alternating with doves. The repeating crown of Queen Elizabeth II is anchored by her name in Tongan transliteration, “Elisabesi–R,” with the suffix standing for “Regent,” along with the year of her coronation and visit to Tonga, “1953,” with alternating *kupesi* that include flowers. Along the inner borders of the cloth are abstracted renditions of “the exalted *sisi* (ornamental girdle) of Ulukalala,” with the inscription “Koe sisi peka o Ulukalala” recalling the chiefly line of Finau ‘Ulukālala. Together, these *kupesi* encode hereditary status.

Unlike the cloth from which this piece was cut, and indeed most of the *ngatu* made and used for the queen’s visit and subsequently divided for redistribution, there is one *launima* now at Te Papa that was kept intact and in the royal household’s stores before it was used again in 1965 in close proximity to Queen Sālote herself.³⁰ This time, though, it took her on a different pathway; it was folded beneath her coffin when she was returned to Tonga by the Royal New Zealand Air Force after her death in Auckland. What had so cemented the connection between the two queens that this *ngatu* made for the visit of Queen Elizabeth II was kept and later used to support Queen Sālote in this way?

Queen Sālote became famous worldwide for the respect she showed Queen Elizabeth II even before the British monarch made her visit to Tonga. During Elizabeth’s coronation parade in 1953, all carriages bearing royal guests had their tops open on the way to Westminster Abbey. On the return from the abbey, it rained heavily, and all carriages were closed—except for that of Queen Sālote, who, in an act of humility and respect, remained visible and engaged despite being exposed to the downpour. Her willingness to endure the rain that day as an active participant in the coronation parade until its conclusion drew cheers from the people lining the streets, and the event retains a special place in the memories of Tongans and British alike:

The press was ecstatic and Queen Salote became a household name overnight. June babies were christened Charlotte (of which Salote is the Polynesian form), a racehorse was named after her and she was the subject of topical songs: “Linger longer, Queen of Tonga.” The *Manchester Guardian* wrote of “the magnificence of

Her Majesty the Queen of Tonga, smiling broadly in a spiteful downpour and heartily waving a powerful bare arm, happy as though all the sun of the friendly islands were beating down.” The *Daily Telegraph* reported that she received biggest cheers of the day, except for The Queen herself and Sir Winston Churchill and that, later, a woman went up to her car in Knightsbridge and call out “Good luck. You were marvellous.” The *Telegraph* concluded that “Queen Salote, whose genial dignity matches her proportions, has won an extraordinary quantity of affection from the British people.” The *Times* described her as “the outstanding overseas figure of the celebrations.”³¹

Her actions were a high point in a relationship of shared respect between the two female monarchs, enacted in multiple ways over more than three decades.³² And so, it transpired that one of the *ngatu* made for the Tongan pathway of these two queens in 1953, infused with *mana*, supported Queen Sālote’s final voyage to her beloved home. After Queen Sālote’s body was returned to Tonga, the *ngatu* was gifted to the Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF) by the Tongan royal family. Three years later, in 1968, the receiving officer, Flight Lieutenant McAllister (the pilot of the plane that carried the Queen’s body back to Tonga), presented the *ngatu* to the Dominion Museum (Te Papa’s predecessor).³³ The RNZAF chose to honor and keep the *ngatu* as a historical document of sorts at the Museum of New Zealand, and their decision to do so was upheld and supported by Tongan officials.

In 2010, Te Papa exhibited the *ngatu* along a single wall, referring to the way it had been used in Tonga. Nicholas Thomas explains that

the metaphor of the path is fundamental to the imagining of relations of alliance and affinity. The long strip of cloth gives material form to the path, but does more than make a relationship visible: its presentation by a long line of people also makes their collective action, and their very collectivity, manifest. Neither society in general nor a particular group such as a clan simply exist; a sense of collectivity cannot be present in people’s minds unless a group somehow appears and acts as a whole . . . It is in this context that collective products, such as large pieces of barkcloth, are especially important. The art form is part of a process of self-revelation and has a particular importance at a moment of presentation, when everyone’s efforts converge; at other times, the cloth’s significance may lie in the prospect or memory of such ceremonial events, or in a particular history of exchange-paths.³⁴

It is tempting to imagine that the *ngatu* had been kept for precisely this purpose, to remember quite literal exchange paths and further cement the significance of the relationship between the two queens. So too, the piece on display at Hastings City Art Gallery Te Whare Toi o Heretaunga in 2023 recalls the *mana* of the two queens who walked upon it, and their converging pathways of great power and respect.

Billie Lythberg is of Swedish, Scottish, and English descent. She is a senior lecturer in the Department of Management and International Business at Waipapa Taumata Rau|The University of Auckland, and an affiliated researcher of Vā Moana–Pacific Spaces at Te Wānanga Aronui o Tāmaki Makau Rau |Auckland University of Technology. She has worked with Māori and Moana colleagues on multiple projects for the Royal Society of New Zealand, including the Marsden Grant-funded ‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures project. She publishes extensively, curates and critiques exhibitions, and develops documentaries for broadcast television.

Notes

¹ Elham Salari is audience and learning manager at Te Whare Toi o Heretaunga–Hastings Art Gallery.

² The talk this article presents draws from Lythberg’s research and writing over two decades, including research previously published in an article in *Tuhinga: Records of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa*, see endnote 30.

³ Edgar Tu‘inukuafe, *A Simplified Dictionary of Modern Tongan* (Auckland: Polynesian Press, 1992), 176, 234.

⁴ Kolokesa Māhina, “Koloa Tukufakaholo: Issues and Challenges Involving the Management of Tonga’s Cultural Heritage,” *Tenth Tongan History Association Conference: Tonga from the Stone Age to the Space Age* (Nuku‘alofa: Unpublished, 2003).

⁵ ‘Okusitino Māhina and Semisi Fetokai Potauaine, “Kula and ‘Uli: Red and Black in Tongan Thinking and Practice,” in *Tonga: Land, Sea and People*, ed. Tangikina Moimoi Skeen and Nancy L. Drescher (Tongan Research Association, Nuku‘alofa Tonga: Vava‘u Press, 2011). See also Epeli Hau‘ofa, “Autonomy and Creativity: A Tribute to the Founder of ‘Atenisi,” *Polynesian Paradox: Essays in Honour of Futa Helu*, ed. I. Campbell and E. Coxon (Suva, Fiji: Institute of Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific, 2005).

⁶ ‘Okusitino Māhina, personal communication, 2003. Cited in Kolokesa Māhina, “Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa: The Case of the Intangible Heritage,” *ICOM General Conference* (Seoul: Unpublished paper, 2004).

⁷ Museo de América, Madrid, Spain, no. 70479, 29.56 x 3.28 m.

⁸ “A este mismo temor debimos atribuir poco después el nuevo obsequio que se nos hizo desplegar una largo alfombra desde la orilla hasta la casa del cava . . .” May 25, 1793. Alejandro Malaspina and José de Bustamante y Guerra, *Viaje político-científico alrededor del Mundo por las corbetas Descubierta y Atrevida al mando de los capitanes de navio D. Alejandro Malaspina y Don José de Bustamante y Guerra desde 1789 a 1794, publicado con una introducción por Don Pedro de Novo y Colson, teniente de navío académico correspondiente de la real de la historia* (Madrid: Imprenta de viuda é hijos de abienzo Isabel la Católica, 1885, 4 y Paz, 6), 271.

⁹ Parboiled starchy root vegetables used to make *ngatu* include the *maho‘a Tonga* (Polynesian arrowroot, *Tacca leontopetaloides*), *manioke koka‘anga* (cassava or tapioca, *Manihot esculenta*), and *misimisi* (common flowering canna lily, *Canna indica*).

¹⁰ Tree-bark dyes include *koka* (red cedar, *Bischofia javanica*), *tongo* (native mangrove, *Rhizophora mangle*), and *tuitui* (candlenut tree, *Aleurites moluccana*).

¹¹ Maxine Tamahori, “Cultural Change in Tongan Bark-Cloth Manufacture” (MA thesis, University of Auckland, 1963), 78.

¹² ‘Okusitino Māhina, *Reed Book of Tongan Proverbs; Ko E Tohi `a E Reed Ki He Lea Tonga Heliaki* (Auckland: Reed Books, 2004), 151.

¹³ Ping-Ann Addo, *Pieces of Cloth, Pieces of Culture: Tapa from Tonga and the Pacific Islands. An Exhibition Catalog* (San Francisco: The Center for Art and Public Life, 2004), 48.

¹⁴ Phyllis Herda, “The Changing Texture of Textiles in Tonga,” *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 108, no. 2 (1999): 154–55.

¹⁵ Adrienne Kaeppler, “The Structure of Tongan Barkcloth Design: Imagery, Metaphor and Allusion,” in *Pacific Art: Persistence, Change and Meaning*, ed. Anita Herle, et al. (Adelaide: Crawford House Publishing, 2002), 292.

¹⁶ Tupou Posesi Fanua, *Tapa Cloth in Tonga* (Nuku‘alofa: Taulua Press, 1986), 11.

¹⁷ Roger Neich and Mick Pendergrast, *Pacific Tapa* (Auckland: David Bateman, 1997), 44; Adrienne Kaeppler, “Airplanes and Saxophones: Post-War Images in the Visual and Performing Arts,” in *Echoes of Pacific War: Papers from the 7th Tongan History Conference Held in Canberra in January 1997*, ed. Deryck Scarr, Neil Gunson, and Jennifer Terrell (Canberra: Target Oceania, 1998). Inscribed “*Ko e vaka-buna*” (“this is an airplane”), the *ngatu* that is Canterbury Museum catalog number E172.130 is part of the Rugby Pratt collection, collected by him in 1922. The provenance held by the Canterbury Museum describes it as celebrating the one-hundredth anniversary of the landing of Rev. Walter Lawry in Mua, Tongatapu, and depicting double and outrigger canoes.

¹⁸ Kaeppler, “Tongan Barkcloth,” 298–9, 306.

¹⁹ John Pule, “Desire Lives in Hiapo,” in *Hiapo: Past and Present in Niuean Barkcloth*, ed. John Pule and Nicholas Thomas (Dunedin, New Zealand: University of Otago Press, 2005), 19.

²⁰ Kaeppler, “Tongan Barkcloth,” 300.

²¹ “The origin of the Hala Paini kupesi set can be traced to Lopeti Cocker of Folaha. The original design for the kupesi was made by Father Gregory Kailao, a Roman catholic priest from Ma’ufanga, who taught art and music at ‘Api Fo’ou College. Lopeti made the first Hala Paini stencil set in the 1920s. Since that time many Hala Paini stencil sets have been made by Lopeti, by the women of Folaha, and by others. Although traditionally the work of women, Lopeti and other men were, and still are, well known for creating stencil sets.” Adrienne L. Kaeppler, *From the Stone Age to the Space Age in 200 Years: Tongan Art and Society on the Eve of the Millennium* (Nuku’alofa: Tongan National Museum, 1999), 36.

²² Kaeppler, “Tongan Barkcloth,” 305.

²³ Nicholas Thomas, “Preface,” in *Paperskin: Barkcloth Across the Pacific* (Brisbane: Queensland Art Gallery, 2009), 9.

²⁴ Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, “Confusing Pleasures,” in *Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums, and Heritage*, ed. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (Berkeley: University of California, 1998), 203.

²⁵ Jehanne Teilhet-Fisk, “To Beat or Not to Beat, That Is the Question: A Study on Acculturation and Change in an Art-Making Process and Its Relation to Gender Structures,” *Pacific Studies* 14, no. 3 (1991): 54.

²⁶ Heather Young Leslie, *Tradition, Textiles and Maternal Obligation in the Kingdom of Tonga* (PhD diss., York University, 1999), 269.

²⁷ Fanny Wonu Veys, “Materialising the King: The Royal Funeral of King Tāufa’āhau Tupou IV of Tonga,” *Australian Journal of Anthropology* 20, no. 1 (2009): 141.

²⁸ Kenneth Bain, *The Friendly Islanders: A Story of Queen Salote and her People* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1954), 34.

²⁹ Bain, *The Friendly Islanders*, 62.

³⁰ It is catalog number FE005172 and discussed in more detail in Billie Lythberg, “Polyvocal Tongan Barkcloths: Contemporary Ngatu and Nomenclature at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa,” *Tuhinga: Records of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa* 24 (2013): 85–104.

³¹ Stanley Martin, “From the Archives: Queen Salote of Tonga,” Royal Over-Sea League, February 22, 2018, <https://www.rosl.org.uk/from-the-archives-queen-salote-of-tonga>.

³² “Queen Salote received every honour that the monarch of the United Kingdom could confer on her. She was made a Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire (DBE) in 1932 and promoted, in 1945, to be a Dame Grand Cross, thus providing her with that pink mantle that was to be so useful eight years later. When Queen Elizabeth II visited Tonga during her extensive Commonwealth tour towards the end of 1953, she made Queen Salote a Dame Grand Cross of the Royal Victorian Order (GCVO). In 1965, the Order of Saint Michael and Saint George was opened to women and, shortly before her death in that year, Queen Salote was made the first Dame Grand Cross (GCMG).” Stanley, “Queen Salote of Tonga.”

³³ Nina Tonga, “Queen Sālote on the World Stage,” Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa (blog), September 5, 2014, <https://blog.tepapa.govt.nz/2014/09/05/queen-salote-on-the-world-stage/>.

³⁴ Nicholas Thomas, *Oceanic Art* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1995), 143.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pacific Arts -- Call for Submissions

Pacific Arts, the journal of the Pacific Arts Association, has an **ONGOING OPEN CALL** for submissions on the arts of Oceania and its diasporas focusing on visual arts, material cultures, and heritage arts. The scope is temporally broad, highlighting both historical and current topics while engaging with a wide range of creative mediums, forms, and subject matter. *Pacific Arts* encourages interdisciplinary approaches to examining the political, social, economic, cultural, aesthetic, and environmental stakes in the production and study of Indigenous visual and material cultures in Oceania, past and present.

Please send full-length submissions and an abstract to pacificarts@ucsc.edu. Submissions should follow the [Pacific Arts style guide](#). *Pacific Arts* is a peer reviewed open access online journal published by the University of California/eScholarship and encourages broad participation and circulation.

Pacific Arts is also accepting reviews of books, media, and exhibitions that relate to visual and material cultures of Oceania. Authors, artists, museums, and publishers interested in having their work reviewed and anyone interested in writing a review should contact the editors at pacificarts@ucsc.edu.

PLEASE SUPPORT PAA & PACIFIC ARTS: There is no cost to contributors to publish with *Pacific Arts*. However, our editorial staff are volunteers and all of our publication costs rely entirely on your PAA membership and donations to UC Santa Cruz's Pacific Art & Visual Studies Fund. We encourage readers and contributors to join the [Pacific Arts Association](#) and/or [donate to the Fund](#) (donations, no matter how small, are very helpful and welcome).

Pacific Arts
Journal of the Pacific Arts Association



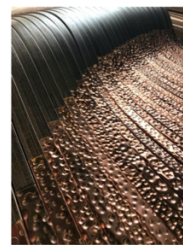
N.S. Vol. 23 No. 1
2023

Pacific Arts
Journal of the Pacific Arts Association



N.S. Vol. 23 No. 2
2023-2024

Pacific Arts
Journal of the Pacific Arts Association



N.S. Vol. 24 No. 1
2024



The Pacific Arts Association is an international organization devoted to the study of the arts of Oceania. The Pacific Arts Association (PAA), founded in 1974 and established as an association in 1978, is an international organization devoted to the study of all the arts of Oceania. PAA provides a forum for dialogue and awareness about Pacific art and culture. By connecting individuals and institutions around the world, PAA encourages greater cooperation among those who are involved with the creation, study, and exhibition of Pacific art.

The peer-reviewed **Pacific Arts journal** features current research and reviews. The **PAA Newsletter** provides timely information about important events to members. PAA's triennial **International Symposium** takes place in alternating venues across the globe and includes special tours, performances, exhibitions, and presentations of academic and artistic research on the arts of Oceania. Members have the opportunity to meet and participate in a PAA-sponsored session at the **College Art Association** annual meeting. PAA-Europe holds a meeting in Europe annually.

PAA's **goals** are:

- To make members more aware of the state of all the arts in all parts of Oceania.
- To encourage international understanding among the nations involved in the arts of Oceania.
- To promote high standards of research, interpretation, and reporting on the arts of Oceania.
- To stimulate more interest in the teaching of courses on Oceanic art especially but not only at the tertiary educational level.
- To encourage greater cooperation among the institutions and individuals who are associated with the arts of Oceania.
- To encourage high standards of conservation and preservation of the material culture in and of Oceanic arts.

Membership: US\$50 for professional individuals and institutions, US\$35 for visual and performing artists, students, and retired persons. Individuals and institutions wishing to become members of PAA can visit the membership page of the PAA website www.pacificarts.org/membership.

PAA SPEAKER SERIES

Pacific Currents

(Pacific Arts Association online speaker series)

‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures: Late Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century Tongan Arts and Their Legacies

~~Billie Lythberg & Phyllis Herda~~

February 2025

(Date, time, and Zoom registration link will be sent to PAA members in January)



Phyllis Herda (anthropologist and Pacific historian), Billie Lythberg (art historian, anthropologist, and lecturer in organizational studies) discuss the New Zealand-based research project “‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures: Late Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century Tongan Arts and Their Legacies” and its affiliated traveling exhibitions. The project’s participants also included Melenaite Taumoefolau (Pacific linguist and researcher in Pacific studies), Hilary Scothorn (art historian and Pacific textile specialist), and Tongan artists Sopolemalama Filipe Tohi and Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck. These academics and artists

worked collaboratively to locate, examine, and interpret historical Tongan artifacts in more than thirty collections throughout Europe, the United Kingdom, the United States, Japan, and Australasia, as well as to investigate the legacies of Tongan–European encounters in this era.

Top: Dagmar Vaikalafi Dyck, *M.A.P.S.*, 2020. Acrylic and spray paint on wood board. Bottom: Sopolemalama Filipe Tohi, *Talanoafolau*, 2020. Andesite, wood, and sennit. ‘Amui ‘i Mu‘a/Ancient Futures exhibition, Te Whare Toi o Heretaunga Hastings Art Gallery, 2023. Photograph courtesy of Te Whare Toi o Heretaunga. Photograph by Thomas Teutenberg

PAA CONFERENCE SESSION at CAA



Current Research in Pacific Visual Studies

PAA Session @ College Art Association Annual Conference

Thursday, February 12, 2025, 9–10:30 AM

Hilton Midtown, New York City

The Pacific Arts Association panel at the College Art Association will feature current research in the interdisciplinary field of Pacific Visual Studies. Panelists will discuss ideas of futurism, contemporary activations of customary forms, activism, anti-colonial creative practices, and more.

Panelists:

“Mata Aho—Weaving and Empowering Female Narratives”

Jacqueline Charles-Rault, Université Le Havre Normandie

“Mapping Race or Nation in the Kingdom of Hawai‘i”

Stacy L. Kamehiro, University of California Santa Cruz

“Fale, Tapa, and Fala: The Past and Future of Samoan Heritage Arts”

Anne E. Allen, Indiana University Southeast

“Hawaiian Futurisms: Mixed-Media Mediums as Generating Anti-Colonial Art”

Nicole K. Furtado, University of California Santa Cruz

“Community Workshops, Environmental Justice, and Installation Art in Oceania”

Maggie Wander, Santa Clara University

Please visit the [CAA Conference website](#) for the full schedule and information about membership and registration.

PAA-EUROPE ANNUAL MEETING



An Ocean of Connection: Oceanic art, artists and museums

Wednesday, June 18 – Friday, June 20, 2025

Sainsbury Research Unit for the Arts of Africa, Oceania & the Americas,
University of East Anglia (UEA), Norwich, UK

Since the 1980s Oceanic scholars (Wendt 1982, Hau'ofa 1994, Teaiwa 2014, amongst others) have responded to the tendency, resulting from colonialism and developmentalism, for Oceania to be divided into clearly delineated and distinct areas by reminding Islanders and non-Islanders alike that the Pacific Ocean is a linking pathway rather than a separating boundary. They emphasised the connection to the ocean for many people living in the region; a place defined by the seascape as much as the landscape. This discourse continues to resonate and inspire scholars, curators, artists and practitioners in the region and beyond.

The main conference theme is related to the Sainsbury Centre's exhibition season *Can the Seas Survive Us?* The exhibition includes Oceanic contemporary art and community responses to the issues that the Pacific region faces, particularly in Yuki Kihara's *Paradise Camp*. The conference will explore the Pacific Ocean as a relational entity, as a powerful metaphor for connection, as a pathway that is reclaimed by Oceanic people today by celebrating the impressive navigational skills of their ancestors when settling the islands, as well as a pathway used by collectors who shipped artefacts to museums.

While papers can cover a range of topics, preference will be given to speakers who bring their own experiences, reflections, and actions in response to the following themes:

- Past and present Oceanic artist/community-museum collaborations
- The cultural and/or political relationship between Oceanic communities and the Pacific Ocean
- The impact of climate change and its expression in the arts and/or museum collections and exhibitions
- The ocean as resource for Oceanic arts
- Collecting journeys of Oceanic arts

(continued on following page)

- Restitution, repatriation or long-term loans of objects
- Shifting exhibition and curatorial practices in relation to Oceania collections
- Possible futures for Moana Oceanic artist-museum collaborations

For those wishing to present papers at the conference, there are two types of presentation:

- (a) a paper of 20 minutes followed by 5-10 minutes discussion
- (b) a report of 10 minutes.

Please send abstracts of 150-200 words for papers or reports to paae.conference@uea.ac.uk, stating your full name in the body of the email, by 23.59 (UK time) on Friday **28 February 2025**. Acceptance will be confirmed by Monday 24 March 2025, 17.00 (UK time), allowing time for presenters to make their travel arrangements. Registration, with an outline meeting timetable and accommodation information, will be available soon thereafter. We expect the conference to run from the afternoon of 18 June until early evening of 20 June.

Scholarships for Participation at the Annual PAA-E Meeting

The Pacific Arts Association-Europe is offering up to two annual scholarships to support the participation of Pacific artists, students and scholars at the annual PAA-E conference. The scholarship is for a maximum of € 400; it pays in addition the cost of the conference fee and the conference dinner.

Eligibility

Pacific artists, students and scholars who propose a contribution to the annual PAA-E conference that is accepted by the conference organisers.

Requirements

- Write a short statement (max. 200 words) explaining why attending the PAA-E meeting is important for you.
- Propose a paper, report or performance to be presented at the conference.
- Provide name and details of one external referee. Applicants should contact their referee directly and ensure the reference is sent to the Scholarship Committee by the closing date.

Applications, including a proposal for a presentation at the conference, should be sent to the Chair of the PAA-E Scholarship Committee, Anita Herle (ach13@cam.ac.uk), AND the President of the PAA-E, Wonu Veys (wonu.veys@wereldculture.nl), by the closing date of **February 28, 2025**. Applicants will be informed of the outcome by March 24, 2025.

Additional Information: <https://pacificarts.org/paa-europe/>

CONFERENCE

ASAO Annual Meeting

February 12–15, 2025

Nadi, Fiji

<https://www.asao.org/>



The **Association for Social Anthropology in Oceania (ASAO)** is an international scholarly society dedicated to the anthropology of the Pacific. ASAO welcomes anyone interested in the lives of Pacific people, including scholars working in Native/Indigenous Studies, Pacific Studies, Cultural Studies, and other disciplines.

For over fifty years, ASAO has served to connect scholars from across the globe and to further knowledge of the Pacific. Our annual meeting has played a role in the origin of several important pieces of Pacific scholarship, including Epeli Hau'ofa's essay "Our Sea of Islands" and Marshall Sahlins's "Historical Metaphors and Mythical Realities."

Our annual meetings are intimate, discussion-based, and cooperative, especially in support of developing topics for publication. ASAO has a book series and a special publication series. Many other publications have emerged from ASAO sessions, including but not limited to those listed in this cumulative bibliography.

ASAO supports the full participation of Pacific Islanders through the Pacific Islands Scholars Award (PISA). ASAO also encourages members to return information to the island communities from which it originated, in forms appropriate to and usable at the village level, through a program called Grant to Return Indigenous Knowledge to Pacific Islands Communities (GRIKPIC).

ASAO also publishes a newsletter three times per year, with useful information such as annual officer reports, meeting session reports, and community updates. Many ASAO members participate throughout the year on ASAONet Listserv, a listserv hosted by the University of Illinois at Chicago.

CONFERENCE

**THE PACIFIC ISLANDS:
ZONE OF PEACE OR OCEAN OF DISCONTENT?**

PACIFIC ISLANDS POLITICAL STUDIES ASSOCIATION (PIPSA) CONFERENCE
Te Herenga Waka-Victoria University of Wellington, Wellington, New Zealand
February 20–21, 2025



The PIPSA executive is delighted to announce an in-person conference running again for the first time since the pandemic, providing the opportunity for scholars, policy makers and all other interested parties to share knowledge and perspectives on a range of important issues facing the region. We want the conference to be broad and inclusive, welcoming of a diverse range of topics, approaches and methods. PIPSA is suitable not only for political scientists and international relations specialists, but also Pacific historians, geographers, economists, anthropologists and those interested in a wide range of security, developmental and political issues. Early career researchers and post-graduate students are especially welcome.

The conference theme is: Pacific Islands: Zone of Peace or Ocean of Discontent? Proposals for panels and papers, however, are welcomed on any aspect of politics in the Pacific region, including relations between the island states/territories and the Pacific Rim nations.

Contact: pipsa2025@gmail.com.

Deadline for conference registration is February 1, 2025.

Conference information: <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/strategic-studies/about/pipsa-2025>

CONFERENCE



49th Annual Meeting of the French Colonial Historical Society (FCHS)
“Representations of Empire: Art, Museums, International Expos”
May 29–31, 2025, Buffalo, NY

Most conference events, including all panels, will take place on or near the campus of SUNY Buffalo State University.

Conference participants will present research related to French colonial history and its legacies. This year’s theme is “Representations of Empire: Art, Museums, International Expos.” Participants explore how the French colonial empire and its colonizing mission(s) were/are portrayed to audiences in the peripheries of empire, mainland France, and the wider world, as well as how the visual culture of empire created spaces for cross-cultural exchanges as well as resistance to empire. Recent years have witnessed an explosion in the historiography of the French imperial imaginary, including how the empire was depicted visually and in other forms. Scholars have discovered myriad means and ways by which people who worked on visual representations of empire have conceptualized French overseas conquest and rule, sometimes deepening longstanding stereotypes while at other times challenging and even changing cultural norms. Colonial subjects and others used visuals to contest empire and its legacies, and still others employed representations of empire in different media to communicate values, reinforce power, or increase their influence across transnational space. An extensive colonial imagery archive resulted in a significant colonialist legacy, which scholars are only just beginning to unpack and understand today.

Additional information about the Society’s scholarly activities, fellowships, and past conferences is available at www.frenchcolonial.org. If you have questions concerning the conference, please email frenchcolonial2025@gmail.com.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Connections within and Beyond Oceania

European Society for Oceanists (ESfO) Conference

June 24–27, 2025, Lucerne

<https://www.pacific-studies.net/conferences/public.php?confID=5>

Oceania has always been interconnected in a myriad of ways. From the first peopling of Australia and the Pacific to today's age of the internet, social media, and mobile phones, people of the Pacific have initiated, strengthened, reinforced, and affirmed, but also blocked, interrupted, resisted, and broken off connections with humans and non-humans alike. They have established complex relations within and between communities, societies, and nation states, formed and recognized links with their physical environment, circulated objects, visions and ideas that shape and redefine their worlds, created artistic expressions celebrating all kinds of connections, and continue to be affected by and contribute to global processes that impact us all.

This conference opens a forum for establishing which connections are central to the lives of Pacific people, but also which connections are neglected, de-emphasized or forgotten. We invite participants to reflect on the nature, shape, direction, and durability of connections, how they are initiated and maintained, and the goals and aspirations towards which they are established. We seek to explore the complex interplay between the environmental, social, and cultural landscapes of Oceania and their local, regional, and global connections and disconnections in the past, present and future.

The conference is also an opportunity to reflect on future connections in Oceania and beyond. With new and continuing challenges like climate change, geopolitical shifts, migration, pandemics and other health crises, the impact of extractive industries, or enduring legacies of colonialism and racism, what new connections and alliances are being forged, which new pathways created? How do people remain connected with their heritage in an increasingly globalized world? And what are the objects and ideas that continue to connect people within Oceania and beyond?

For more information, please contact esfo2025@gmail.com

CALL FOR PAPERS

**History of Photography panel
Pacific History Association Conference
National University of Sāmoa, Apia, December 2–5, 2025**



The call for papers has been announced for the 2025 Pacific History Association (PHA) conference to be held in Apia, at the National University of Sāmoa. It will be preceded by two workshops, one for post-grads (a “Master” class) and one for local history teachers.

At the 2023 PHA conference at Warrnambool, the History of Photography panel was, ***“Across the seas; the history of photography in the Pacific Islands”*** and it included papers from across the broad subfields of art, literature, anthropology, museum studies, fashion, travel, journalism, and media.

The 2025 panel uses the same label and is open to empirical or theoretical examination of individual images, photographers, studios, albums, postcards, lantern slides, travel photography, official reports, expedition photography, domestic photography, illustrated books, photojournalism, and propaganda. Any photograph or body of photography published or in repositories, from or about the Pacific Islands is the center of interest. Proposals outside these areas are also welcome.

The first History of Photography panel at the PHA was at UH-Hilo in 1996, followed by panels at each subsequent PHA bi-annual conference. Papers from previous PHA photography panels have been published as special issues of *Pacific Studies*, and *JPH*, and those from Cambridge PHA 2018 appeared as a special double issue of *JNZPS*.

The panel will take the usual format, with 20-minute papers followed by ten minutes of questions, presented with accompanying song/dance/talk, and/or PowerPoint (but no reading of papers!!!) The NUS campus has full projection facilities and internet access. A decision on Zoom presentations for those unable to attend, has yet to be made by the organizers.

Heather Waldroup and Max Quanchi are co-chairs.

Send your proposal to waldrouphl@appstate.edu and Quanchi.amqfu@gmail.com

Please include:

Title

Abstract (100-150 words)

Key words (six)

Your affiliation and contact email address

CALL FOR PAPERS

Libraries, Archives, and Museums in Oceania

A Special Issue of the *Journal of New Zealand & Pacific Studies*

Guest Edited by Joshua Bell, Cristela Garcia-Spitz, and Halena Kapuni-Reynolds

Though shaped by their colonial legacies and postcolonial presents, libraries, archives and museums can also be spaces of hope, healing and collective reimagining. These institutions and their staff steward various media formats (audiovisual objects and texts), giving presence to the many pasts of Oceania, and must reckon with Indigenous interventions that reconfigure these collections as familial legacies, belongings and ancestors. Collaborative work with Indigenous communities has also helped open these institutions and their collections to new possibilities, resulting in richer understandings about activating belongings to nurture and uplift source and descendant communities and returning belongings and ancestors through legal and ethical means. Simultaneously, Indigenous communities continue creating their own cultural centers, blurring distinctions between libraries, archives and museums to serve the needs of their respective communities.

While these projects and trends are in dialogue with global practices, they are also distinctly local and heterogeneous within Oceania. How are these projects in and around libraries, archives and museums transforming these institutions and their collections? How are Indigenous epistemologies helping to challenge the colonial legacies of these institutions? What new collaborative practices are emerging, which help to recenter the relations that may have otherwise been dormant? What lessons for institutions outside of Oceania can be taken from these engagements?

The *Journal of New Zealand & Pacific Studies* invites contributions that offer new insights into library, archive and museum practice in and about Aotearoa New Zealand and the Pacific, and associated collections from the region that may be housed outside of Oceania. Papers might address the following issues:

- Indigenizing and decolonizing strategies for curatorial practice, exhibition design, collection
- development and management
- community-based programming and research
- repatriation and ethical returns
- repatriation initiatives
- conservation/preservation
- digitizing collections and ethical and inclusive metadata practices
- digital scholarship and pedagogy
- emerging technologies and their impact on research
- evolving roles, education/mentoring the next generation of museum/archive professionals

We are particularly interested in case studies highlighting lesser-known libraries, archives and museums in or of the Pacific.

The *Journal of New Zealand & Pacific Studies* is a double-blind refereed journal. Articles, accompanied by a short biography, abstract and keywords, must be between 5000 and 8000 words, including notes and references, and must be formatted according to the journal style guide (<https://www.intellectbooks.co.uk/MediaManager/File/intellectstyleguide2016v1.pdf>). Original interviews (for example, with an artist, curator, librarian or archivist), research reports, review essays and exhibition reviews, between 1500 and 4000 words, are also welcome.

Deadline for submissions is 14 April 2025. All article submissions will be subject to peer review. If accepted for publication, essays will be published in vol. 13, no. 2, December 2025. Please submit complete articles for consideration to Heather Waldroup at waldrouphl@appstate.edu

EXHIBITION



GALLERY 'IOLANI AT WINDWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRESENTS

Ho'okāhi Ka 'I lau Like Ana Wield the Paddles Together

During the 13th Festival of Pacific Arts and Culture in Honolulu, Hui Kālai Ki'i O Kūpā'aikē'e hosted 70 Moananuiākea carvers, uniting to create 15-foot Hoe Uli (steering paddles) as symbols of collective self-determination. This exhibition features Hoe Uli crafted by Pacific delegations, including Hawai'i, Aotearoa, American Samoa, Western Samoa, Tonga, Fiji, Northern Mariana Islands, Micronesia, French Polynesia, Guam, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Rapa Nui, Solomon Islands, Taiwan, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

January 18 – March 7, 2025

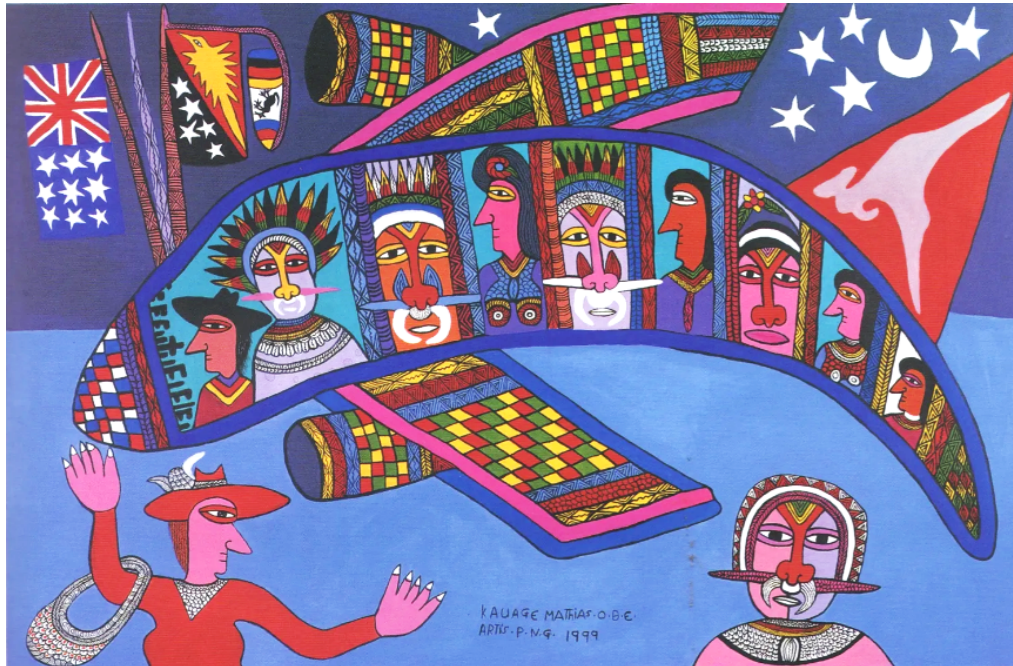
Artist reception: Saturday, January 18, 3–6 p.m.

Gallery hours: Open MON.–SAT., 1–5pm; Closed SUN. and holidays
Gallery phone: 808-236-9155 | gallery.windward.hawaii.edu
Located adjacent to Palikū Theatre



Gallery 'Iolani
Windward Community College
45-720 Kea'ahala Rd.
Kāne'ohe, HI 96744

EXHIBITION



Contemporary Painting in Papua New Guinea: Mathias Kauage and His Family

De Young Museum, San Francisco, March 30, 2024–March 15, 2026

Mathias Kauage (ca. 1944–2003) is acclaimed for his boldly colorful paintings of a world radically changing around him in the late twentieth century. *Contemporary Painting in Papua New Guinea: Mathias Kauage and His Family* at the de Young Museum in San Francisco features four paintings from the permanent collection, including a new acquisition, on view for the first time. During his lifetime, Mathias experienced dramatic societal shifts — not only during the decades under colonial Australian administration but also after Papua New Guinea achieved independence in 1975. Both periods are a focus of his work. In the late 1970s, he led the contemporary arts movement in the newly independent country, which explored nationhood and technological advancement. Later works by Mathias, his wife Elizabeth (Elisabet), and their family also addressed social issues such as the onset of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The circle of artists working in their style grew to encompass their children, including nephew and adopted son Apa Hugo. They, along with Elizabeth, continue their father’s artistic legacy today as professional painters.

<https://www.famsf.org/exhibitions/papua-new-guinea-mathias-kauage>

Image Credit: Mathias Kauage (Mingu Village, Kundiawa-Gembogl District, Chimbu [Simbu] Province, now in the independent country of Papua New Guinea, ca. 1944–2003). *Kauage Flies to Scotland for Opening of New Museum of Contemporary Art*, 1999. Acrylic on canvas. Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, Museum purchase, Phyllis C. Wattis Fund for Major Accessions, INC2023.66. Photograph by Randy Dodson. Courtesy of the Estate of Mathias Kauage and Rebecca Hossack Gallery, London

EXHIBITION

FROCK A WHANAUNGATANGA
The Pacific Sisters

Presented by Bunjil Place in association with Asia TOPA, Arts Centre Melbourne
December 8, 2024–March 9, 2025
Gallery, Bunjil Place



World Premiere. Advocates for bodily autonomy, environmental care, and collective action, do not miss this major exhibition, curated by Jade Hadfield (Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngāti Whātua ki Kaipara).

Kinship, ritual, adornment, and activism are masterfully woven together in *FROCK A WHANAUNGATANGA*, an exhibition and workshop series by legendary Tagata Moana (People of the Pacific) art collective, the Pacific Sisters, exploring living ancestral connections through taonga and measina, treasures of the Pacific.

Bunjil Place Gallery transforms into a vibrant, welcoming space that seeks to honour the shared histories of First Peoples and Moana Peoples. Encounter niu aitu (new ancestors) avatar, dressed in iconic and intricate handmade garments and cherished measina, alongside taonga from Museums Victoria, reuniting and reawakening the making practices of the moana.

Kick back in a Pasifika lounge adorned with imagery and archival footage of the Pacific Sisters' 30+ years of groundbreaking artistic work. Since their emergence in the early '90s, the Pacific Sisters have gained international acclaim for their innovative, multidisciplinary practice and fashion activism. They skillfully blend Moana-based arts and cultural practices with contemporary art forms, celebrating diverse urban Māori, Pacific, and Queer identities.

Information: <https://www.asiatopa.com.au/event/frock-a-whanaungatanga>

EXHIBITION

**Frock Enz Limited Edition and FrocktiVAtion
The Pacific Sisters**

Presented by Asia TOPA, Arts Centre Melbourne
February 25, 2025 — June 30, 2025
Smorgon Family Plaza, Arts Centre Melbourne



Alongside their centrepiece exhibition [FROCK A WHANAUNGATANGA](#) at Bunjil Place, the Pacific Sisters present a short series of interventions designed to bring the whun (fun) and celebrate Pasifika culture and whanaungatanga (kinship) through fashion, actiVAtion, film and music. Nau mai, haere mai, all welcome!

Frock Enz Limited Edition

The Sisters make new history by diving into the hidden depths of the Australian Performing Arts Collection to unearth a curated selection of the zoot suits of Aotearoa supergroup Split Enz, courtesy of the Australian Performing Arts Collection. Designed by Noel Crombie, these original suits will be on display throughout the festival in Arts Centre Melbourne's Smorgon Family Plaza. From 3 March, the display will expand to become a face off with the Sister's updated and thrifted responses, rewriting their intertwined histories as local legends of pop culture in Aotearoa.

FROCKtiVAtion

On 1 March, join the Pacific Sisters for a special public activation where they blend live music, spoken word, taonga pūoro (traditional māori instruments), and processional movement to bring their garments to life in a stunning ActiVAtion before going on display.

Information: <https://www.asiatopa.com.au/event/frock-enz-limited-edition-and-frocktiVAtion>

EXHIBITION/EVENT

SAUNIGA
FAFSWAG

A Work-in-Progress Sharing
March 6–8, 2025
The Show Room, Arts Centre Melbourne



Samoan Proverb: '*E sui faiga ae tumaufa'avae.*'

Translation: The form changes, but the underlying principles remain.

Join us for this work-in-progress sharing by the internationally acclaimed Queer Indigenous arts collective FAFSWAG.

SAUNIGA explores the majestic world of our earliest ancestors: the animals from the land, sky and ocean.

SAUNIGA recalls the sacred connections between spirits (Aitu) of the old world and the lives of their Samoan descendants. Bringing together dance, costume and ceremony.

SAUNIGA seeks out playful discovery, posing curious reflections on our relationship with animals and the environment, told through a Samoan world view.

SAUNIGA is a new work in development which will premiere at Manchester International Festival. The presentation at Asia TOPA shares excerpts from early development of the work.

Information: <https://www.asiatopa.com.au/event/sauniga>

EXHIBITION

**Faith and Philanthropy:
Queen Emma Kaleleonālanī's Visit to England, 1865-1866**

Hawaiian Hall, Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum
July 19, 2024 through Spring 2025



Between 1865-1866, Queen Emma Kaleleonālanī departed Hawai‘i for a year-long journey to England, the only journey outside of the Hawaiian Kingdom that she took during her lifetime (1836-1885). Her trip was not for recreation or pleasure but had a specific mission: fundraising for the construction of St. Andrew’s Cathedral, the seat of the Anglican Church in the Kingdom of Hawai‘i. For 183 days, Queen Emma leveraged her royal status and likeness to garner support and cash funds from English citizens around the country, resulting in national coverage of her extensive travels as well as the adoration of the British public.

“The fundraising for the Mission and the cathedral occurred during a particularly dark period of Queen Emma’s life,” shared Sarah Kuaiwa, Ph. D., Bishop Museum curator for Hawai‘i and Pacific Cultural Resources, and curator of the installation. “At 29 she was a dowager queen, a widow, and had lost her only child. Queen Emma channeled her grief and pain into a purpose for the Anglican Church in Hawai‘i, an important story that is not widely known.”

Faith and Philanthropy highlights new research identifying items associated with Queen Emma’s travel and fundraising strategies, utilizing objects from multiple Bishop Museum collections to demonstrate not only the richness of her journey but also the social, religious, and political spaces she navigated as a Hawaiian royal.

Photo credit: *The Queen of the Sandwich Islands*, Oxford, 1866. This file comes from [Wellcome Images](https://www.wellcomeimages.org/), a website operated by Wellcome Trust, a global charitable foundation based in the United Kingdom.

EXHIBITION

THE YALE PEABODY'S NEW "HALL OF THE PACIFIC" OPENS TO THE PUBLIC



For the first time, the Peabody is exhibiting an extensive collection of artworks, contextual photographs and historical artifacts that celebrates the living cultures of Pacific Islander communities. The 254 objects on display include a carved seagoing canoe prow from Vanuatu, elaborate façade paintings that adorned a ceremonial house in Papua New Guinea, and decorated shields from the Solomon Islands used for defense and in ceremonies.

The comprehensive new exhibit will showcase the enormity of the Pacific, the vast distances explored and navigated by Pacific Islanders, and the rich diversity of the region's cultures.

The 3,655 sq.-ft. Hall of the Pacific, the museum's second largest space behind the Burke Hall of Dinosaurs, showcases dozens of objects that have been out of public view and held in private collections for decades. The Peabody has never had a permanent exhibit of cultural artifacts from the Pacific, so in addition to Jaffe's collection, many of the museum's objects are also on display for the first time as well. The Peabody's new work and classroom spaces will enable faculty, students, and researchers to have greater access to the collection for study.

The expansive hall will also serve as a space for community events and discussions for the wider AAPI community in New Haven and beyond.

Other Highlights from the Hall of the Pacific Include:

- A rare *Tago* mask from Tami Islands.
- A pair of rare *Eharo* masks from Papua New Guinea
- A 19th-century *warup* drum from Saibai Island
- An *iUla Tavatava*, a ridged-head missile club from Fiji
- A collection of stylized spirit face masks from Vanuatu
- A Māori feather cloak from New Zealand

See additional photos of the new Hall of the Pacific and its collection [here](#).

Plan Your Visit to the Peabody: <https://peabody.yale.edu/>

EXHIBITION



Aloha Nō

Hawai'i Triennial

Feb. 15–May 4, 2025

Curated by Wassan Al-Khudhairi, Binna Choi, and Noelle M.K.Y. Kahanu

More than a ubiquitous Hawaiian greeting, aloha is a Hawaiian philosophy and way of life. Aloha is an action that embodies a profound love and truth-telling, a practice that has been kept and cared for by the people of Hawai'i for generations. This practice of aloha engenders a deep connectivity to the 'āina (land), environment, elements, and each other. By collapsing two, seemingly opposite, meanings — “no” in English with “nō,” an intensifier, in 'ōlelo Hawai'i (Hawaiian language) — ALOHA NŌ seeks to reclaim aloha as an active cultural practice and situate it as a transformative power that is collectively enacted through contemporary art.

Curated by Wassan Al-Khudhairi, Binna Choi, and Noelle M.K.Y. Kahanu—the first non-hierarchical trio of curators for the Triennial composed of women of color—HT25 is a multi-site exhibition of contemporary art from Hawai'i, the Pacific, and beyond. As part of an established field of art biennials and triennials around the world, HT25 is an internationally recognized, large-scale exhibition that presents the latest artistic works and explores local-global dialogues through a Hawai'i- and Pacific-centered lens.

Additional information and updates: <https://hawaiicontemporary.org/>

EXHIBITION

SHIFTING GROUND

Australian Indigenous Printmaking
Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, University of Virginia
March 9, 2024 – March 2, 2025



Shifting Ground explores the dynamic terrain of Australian Indigenous printmaking, showcasing works by twenty-two artists who have produced prints with Basil Hall Editions. Established by master printmaker Basil Hall, who began working collaboratively with artists in the early 1980s, Basil Hall Editions has worked for more than two decades with several hundred artists, many based within Aboriginal run art centers in the Northern Territory, South Australia, and Western Australia, and who have been introduced to print through visiting workshops.

In 2023, Hall donated a vast collection of 1,316 workshop proofs to the Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, which is becoming a center for the study of Indigenous prints. The collection represents a complex roving topography of Indigenous contemporary art practice from the last twenty years, traversing works by senior and emerging artists, significant collaborative projects, engagements with renowned print artists, and a diversity of experimental and singular approaches to the print medium.

This exhibition explores the transformative effects of print collaborations – shifting practice, opening-up new ground, and instantiating new material, conceptual, and visual languages. For many of these artists, engagement with print has led to the production of some of their most iconic artworks; and for some it has become a recurring and central practice. The prolific travel of studio-workshops like Basil Hall Editions across Australia, and the intensive engagement of collaborating artists, has established print as a major phenomenon in Indigenous art, marking new ground in a multitude of ways.

To view the artwork labels and wall text for the exhibition, click the link below: [*Shifting Ground* Part 1 Wall Texts and Labels](#)

Image: Detail of GULUMBU YUNUPINU, *Garak*, 2008, etching on Hahnemühle paper, collaborator: Basil Hall, Jacqueline Gribbin; printer: Jacquelin Gribbin, Monique Auricchio. Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection of the University of Virginia, gift of Basil Hall, 2023.0006.011.001. Courtesy of the estate of the artist and Buku-Larrngay Mulka Centre.

EXHIBITION

Kū a Lanakila!

Expressions of Sovereignty in Early-Territorial Hawai'i



OCTOBER 5, 2024 – AUGUST 10, 2025 | J. M. LONG GALLERY

Kū a Lanakila! Expressions of Sovereignty in Early Territorial Hawai'i, 1900-1920 delves into the ways Kānaka ʻŌiwi (Native Hawaiian people) asserted their presence and sovereignty during Hawai'i's early territorial period through cultural and political expressions. Featuring a stunning array of collection items including 'ahu'ula (capets), lei hulu, banners, and political ephemera, the exhibit highlights how Native Hawaiians engaged in public ceremony, competitive sports, and political activism to maintain their identity and agency in a time of profound change.

Showcasing rarely seen items from Bishop Museum's Ethnology and Library & Archives collections, this exhibit bridges the gap between the Hawaiian Kingdom and early territorial periods, revealing the resilience and adaptability of Native Hawaiian People. Visitors will see how ali'i leadership and cultural production continued to thrive. Notable pieces include the 40-foot koa racing canoe commissioned by Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana'ole, alongside embroidered handkerchiefs and campaign ribbons that tell stories of political engagement and advocacy.

Kū a Lanakila! Expressions of Sovereignty in Early Territorial Hawai'i, 1900-1920 not only celebrates Hawaiian cultural and political history but also serves as a vital narrative extension of the museum's Hawaiian Hall, filling in historical gaps and offering new perspectives on the continuity of Native Hawaiian leadership and cultural expression. Whether you are a lifelong learner, museum member, or part of the Native Hawaiian community, this exhibit invites you to reflect on the enduring spirit of Kānaka ʻŌiwi and their contributions to Hawai'i's story.

<https://www.bishopmuseum.org/kualanakila/>

MEDIA RELEASE

KASTOM: A MELANESIAN HERITAGE

A PACIFIC PATHWAYS FILM BY CAROLINE YACOE

KASTOM presents indigenous dances, music, ceremonies, rituals and scenes of daily life that underlie the socio-economic and political beliefs of the Melanesian countries of Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Fiji, and New Caledonia. Filmed primarily in 2023 in Vanuatu during MACFEST (The Melanesian Arts and Culture Festival). These **kastom** practices show a wisdom and relevance for issues worldwide today including climate change and national independence.

Contact: cyacoep@gmail.com
Phone: +1-808-384-5438

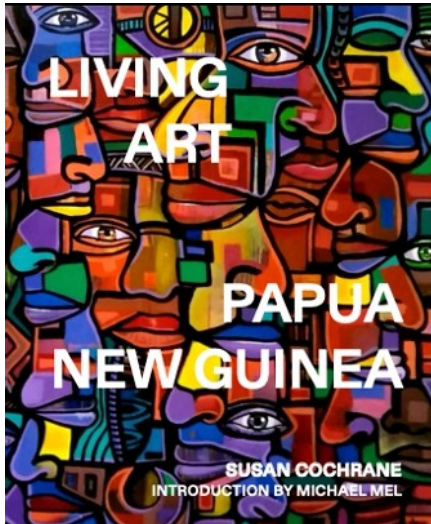
FALL 2024

SCAN FOR
MORE INFO



NEW PUBLICATION

**Pre-order your copies of
LIVING ART
PAPUA NEW GUINEA**



To be launched in 2025 to celebrate Papua New Guinea's 50 years of independence, *Living Art in Papua New Guinea* by Susan Cochrane, with a preface by Steven Kilanda and an introduction by Michael Mel, is a stunning book that brings alive the art and culture of Papua New Guinea.

This impressive, hardcover, full-colour art book—lavishly illustrated with over 100 photos, presents artworks and cultural performances that are astonishing for their dramatic visual effect and virtuosity.

Culture, politics, history, and identity are interlinking themes through which the book presents ideas about artists, creative processes, and aesthetics to reveal Papua New Guinea's diversity of cultures and environments. It locates innovative artists in their villages, in urban settings, and on the international stage.

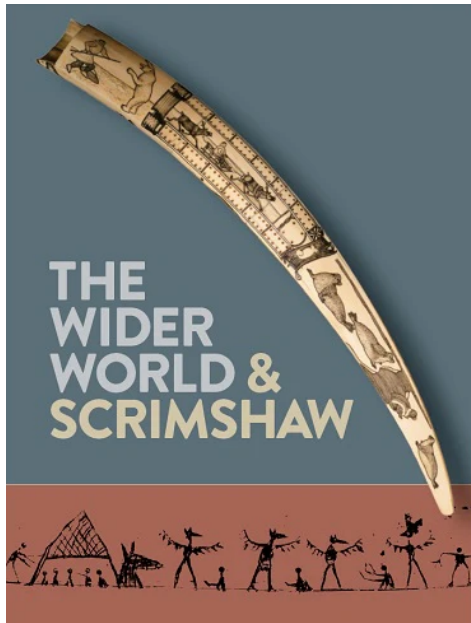
“Through art, this book tells multiple stories—some personal perspectives, or others which share our ideas and concerns. Without stories: Where are we? Who are we? How are we?” ~From the Preface by Steven Enomb Kilanda

There is a limited number of books being printed and it is now available for pre-order. Your pre-order will assist in the production of the book and part of the sales proceeds will benefit existing and emerging Papua New Guinean artists.

Email: info@melbournebooks.com.au

Publication details: Large format, colour, hardcover, 304 pages. Recommended retail price €59 + €17 postage.

NEW PUBLICATION



The Wider World and Scrimshaw
Edited by Naomi Slipp

This expansive catalogue with essays and contributions from a number of Pacific scholars and makers records the exhibition of the same name at New Bedford Whaling Museum, Wattles Gallery, June 14–November 11, 2024. It took the Museum’s scrimshaw collection (objects carved by whalers on the byproducts of marine mammals) and placed it in conversation with carved decorative arts and material culture made by Indigenous community members from across the Pacific and Arctic. Native communities

across Oceania, the Pacific, and Arctic have cosmologies related to whales, distinctive maritime traditions involving marine mammals, and vibrant carving styles. They were also impacted by commercial whaling ventures in the 1800s and the external pressures of colonialism and Western empire-building.

This interdisciplinary, community-driven, and collections-focused project engaged questions about identity, place, and material, and considered how exploration and whaling impacted the production of material culture in this diverse region between 1700 and today. The exhibition showcased over three hundred objects, paying particular attention to ones that indicate cultural and material exchanges. How did whaling (internal or external) impact these different communities and their unique art forms – from New Bedford to Aotearoa to Utqiagvik? In what ways do these legacies continue within contemporary art, communities, and cultures?

The exhibition considered different cultural products from Oceanic material culture and Arctic carvings to engraved sperm whale teeth. Organized in consultation with a diverse advisory board of artists, scholars, and culture bearers and in partnership with NBWM curators, it explored the rich cultural traditions, carving forms, and material exchanges that emerged in cultural contact zones across the Pacific world and continue to shape artistic practice and communities today.

Ordering information: <https://store.whalingmuseum.org/products/the-wider-world-scrimshaw>

NEW PUBLICATION



Native Title NEWSLETTER

Issue 2 | 2024



Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies

Published: December 19, 2024

Newsletter: https://aiatsis.gov.au/sites/default/files/research_pub/NativeTitle-Newsletter_2024%20Issue%202_WEB.pdf

The Indigenous Country and Governance Unit (**ICG**) delivers information services and activities to support the native title sector, particularly native title organizations, and undertakes research activities to inform law and policy reform.

Over two editions per year, the Native Title Newsletter features updates on key developments in law and policy, contributions from the broader native title sector and updates on the activities of the ICG.

Keep informed by [subscribing to the Newsletter online](#) or if you would like to make a contribution, please [contact the ICG](#) for further information.

ORGANIZATION



The Oceanic Art Society

The aim of the Oceanic Art Society is to further the understanding and appreciation of Oceanic art. The focus is on the traditional and contemporary art of the indigenous peoples of Melanesia, Micronesia, Polynesia and Australasia. We hold regular presentations and seminars, and an annual Forum; we publish a quarterly Journal and send free newsletters to interested subscribers, worldwide.

For membership, event, and subscription information, visit:

<https://www.oceanicartsociety.org.au/>

Postal Address:
Secretary OAS
PO Box 3287,
Waremba NSW
Australia 2046

ORGANIZATION



EASTER ISLAND FOUNDATION

<https://www.easterislandfoundation.org/>

The Easter Island Foundation (EIF) is a public 501(c)3 organization registered in California. The organization is overseen by a volunteer Board of Directors who share an interest and concern about the culture and history of Rapa Nui and Oceania and include a variety of professions with expertise in anthropology, art, education, information technology, management and fundraising. The EIF supports the preservation of the Rapa Nui heritage and culture through education. It was incorporated in 1989 to give back to the community that has inspired the world through its rich history, vibrant culture and monumental archaeological treasures.

Our Mission:

The Easter Island Foundation supports the Rapa Nui people to preserve their vibrant Polynesian culture. We believe that education and opportunity strengthen the individual, family, economy, and community as a whole. Our vision is to empower the communities of Rapa Nui to make a difference in protecting their future and past. The EIF focuses on education to fulfill this mission.

Journal of Polynesian Archaeology and Research (JPAR)

JPAR is an open-access, peer-reviewed journal co-sponsored by the [Easter Island Foundation](https://www.easterislandfoundation.org/) (EIF) and the [Society for Hawaiian Archaeology](https://www.societyforhawaiianarchaeology.org/) (SHA) and published by the University of Hawaii Press. This journal carries forward the legacy of the Rapa Nui Journal, the final issue of which was released in February 2023.

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Conference CFP



Conference 2025: Pacific Discourses and Destinies
Tuesday 3 to Friday 6 June 2025

Hosted in 2025 by The University of Sydney, our gathering will focus on exploring and navigating the concepts of discourses and destinies, and how they relate to the Pacific, its people and places.

Much attention – locally, regionally and globally – continues to be placed on the Pacific. Whether it's being contested through geopolitical endeavours, to being celebrated for its traditional cultures, the Pacific is no stranger to attention. However, who determines how the region is understood is key to this conversation. Is it the highest bidder for the natural resources that control these narratives, or the local communities that generally don't benefit from such financial investments and exploitations? Is it the military power that exercises more diplomatic prowess, or Indigenous wisdoms from across the region? This conference strives to explore these various tensions, whilst also showcasing Pacific strengths and solutions in trying to make sense of the underlying discourses that determine the possible destinies of the Pacific region and beyond.

The conference will encourage an intersectional talanoa, provoking participants to be mindful of how their disciplinary perspectives and practices interact with the complexities of Pacific discourses and destinies. Sub-themes supporting these discussions will include panel presentations, papers and performances from the following areas:

- Pacific Studies
- Pacific Education
- Pacific Social Work
- Pacific Employment
- Pacific Health
- Pacific Sports
- Pacific Visual Arts
- Pacific Performing Arts
- Pacific Literature
- Pacific Media
- Pacific Fashion
- Pacific Finance
- Pacific Tech and Innovation
- Pacific Climate and Environment
- Pacific Sciences

Submission instructions, templates and access to view accepted panel abstracts are available at: [AAPS Poster and Paper submissions guidelines 2025](#)

- The deadline for submissions is **Friday 28 February 2025**
- Submissions will be notified on **Friday 14 March 2025**

Conference—Save the Date



We're thrilled to announce that PAA's XIV INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM will take place at **Wereldmuseum in Leiden, the Netherlands, from June 23-27, 2026!**

The International Symposium will coincide with a major exhibition on Western New Guinea.

Mark your calendars and stay tuned—more details will be shared over the next year and a half.