

**The ANNUAL TAUTAI Tertiary SHOW**

**And THEN  
WHAT?**

**16 AUG - 14 SEPT**

**Curated by ROSANNA Raymond**

## And THEn WHaT?

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## **And THeN WHaT?**

ART AND ACTIVISM THROUGH A PACIFIC LENS

Tautai Tertiary Exhibition  
17 August - 14 September 2018  
ST PAUL St Galleries One and Two

Katharine Atafu-Mayo, Daniel Ellison, Jessie Hack, Taiese John Leapai,  
'Ofa Lehā, Tehlor-Lina Mareko, 'Uhila Kanongata'a Nai, Tyrun Posimani,  
Kahurangiariki Smith, Lastman So'oula and Naawie Tutugoro.  
Curated by Rosanna Raymond

**And THeN WHaT?** explores political agency in art and how colonialism shapes identity. The Tautai Tertiary Exhibition is curated by Rosanna Raymond and features works by eleven Auckland and Wellington tertiary students. It includes installations, performative and sound works, moving image, and painting. As well as opening night performances and artists talks, the project includes a women only gathering that focuses on cultural ceremonies, attitudes to sex and blood rites.

**And THeN WHaT?** is the tenth tertiary exhibition supported by Tautai, and features work by artists currently studying in Auckland or Wellington. The group was selected by Rosanna Raymond to respond to the provocation: "What are you as an artist contributing to the current POLYtical environment? Does politics have a place in your art practice? What does art and activism look like through a Pacific lens?" Topics that are explored include colonial histories, their effects on culture, identity loss and choice, and how these aspects play out in Aotearoa today.

The Tautai Tertiary Exhibition has evolved since its beginning in 2009. The first six annual exhibitions held at ST PAUL St Gallery featured Auckland-based artists. In 2015, the online offering, *The Drowned World*, opened the project up to student artists throughout the country. In 2016, the show evolved into a biennial cycle enlisting experienced curators to lead projects, extending its reach with an expanded public programme, and a Wellington exhibition following the Auckland debut. The exhibition provides student artists the opportunity to better understand how an exhibition is put together, and provides participating artists with additional professional development opportunities, including presenting an artist talk and having their work critiqued by people from outside their tertiary institution.

## And THeN WHaT?

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### **Taiese John Leapai**

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## And THeN WHaT?

POLYtics...Art and Activism in the Land of Milk and Honey

*Rosanna Raymond*

I cry the ocean  
I bleed the earth  
I sleep with mountains  
I greet you with my dead

Let us take a moment to acknowledge those who have passed, for we are the past, we are the present, we are the future.

Greetings and acknowledgments to Ngāti Whātua who hold the mana of Tāmaki Makaurau, where I reside.

Thanks and praise to Tautai and St Pauls Gallery for the invitation to create space for the next wave of Moana Oceania artists.

Faafetai ma le fa'afetai

We now live in the times known as the Anthropocene; scientists have officially declared the irreversible effect of humans on our planet's ecologies. Politically the far right is on the rise, with open racism and hate crimes playing out on the streets and on our screens. Socially the gap between the *haves* and the *have-nots* is widening, equal rights and pay are still issues in regards to gender and diversity in the work place. The effects of colonialism both past and present are still pervasive in the lives of indigenous peoples throughout the globe.

Sitting in New York City as a Chester Dale Fellow at the Metropolitan Museum, I pondered these issues while reflecting on my own art practice (and privilege). Art of the Pacific has tended to be considered a safe option to grace the walls of galleries and living rooms in Aotearoa New Zealand. Exotic, colourful, fragrant, not loaded with the politics of colonisation that the *Māori arts movement* is known for. Times have changed, we as the descendants of migrants have changed. During this reflective time I asked myself, what does art and activism look like through a Pacific lens to today's emerging practitioners? What are our younger artists contributing to the current POLYtical environment?

The 10th Tautai Tertiary exhibition is the result of this musing; I will let the words of the artists tell the stories of their works, not mine. My mission was to empower them to navigate a professional artistic space outside the comfort of their tertiary studios leaving them open to criticism from the public, art critiques and their own community.

My final provocation is also found in the title...after the works are returned to their makers...I wonder...And THeN WHaT?

May my waters greet your waters  
May my mountains greet your mountains  
May my house greet your house  
May my people greet your people

## And THen WHaT?

...HAVE YOU LEARNED

*Ioana Gordon-Smith*

Established in 2009, the Tautai tertiary exhibition is a milestone for many Moana-heritage students. The 2018 iteration features work by a select number of Moana-heritage artists studying at various tertiary institutions around Tamaki-Makaurau and Te Whanganui-a-Tara. Being in the tertiary exhibition then represents a moment of selection; a successful proposal or an impression well-made. Significantly, the exhibition also marks an opportunity to engage in the process of exhibition-making, from proposal to artist statements and media through to installation. It's a process you can't practice in private. More than anything, the Tautai Tertiary Exhibition is created to enable students to begin to think of their work in the world, outside of their studio spaces; to consider the act of exhibition-making as one that will impact how their work is read and translates to an undefined audience.

As a Tautai exhibition, there is something of a default Moana framework already in place. But past shows have evidenced scope to play with curatorial approaches to selecting artists. Some curators have opted to select works after a series of studio visits. Others have selected works from open call-outs. This year, the exhibition began with a bolshy brief. For this year's Tertiary Exhibition, Curator Rosanna Raymond asked students to consider how their work responds to and engages with our current political moment, one she describes as marked by the urgency of climate change, the rise of the far right, and ongoing loss of Indigenous cultures. In her call for proposals, Raymond invited prospective artists to address the following provocation:

**What are you as an artist contributing to the current POLYtical environment? Do politics have a place your art practice, what does art and activism look like through a Pacific lens?**

The brief reflects a desire to consider the relationship between an art practice and broader political commentary centred in a Pacific position. The resulting works can be read as orbiting out to survey what young artists see as current issues that affect them as Moana people in the current moment. Many of the works are concerned with the representation of Moana and Māori in media. Daniel Ellison's *Media Studies*, 2018, scrambles news headlines from Pacific and Māori news stories to generate a series of new phrases. Plastered on the wall like protest slogans, the phrases undercut the absurdity of mainstream news coverage. Looking at the accessibility of Indigenous images, Naawie Tutugoro's *who will buy my jpegs*,

2018, compiles images taken from the internet to point towards the accessibility of images and their susceptibility to appropriation.

The loss and potential adaptation of traditional knowledge is also a recurring concern. A series of ink drawings in Taiese John Leapai's *Fogatai* (Surface of the Sea), looks at the real human cost of losing knowledge, with a work that reflects of the number of Māori and Pacific Islanders who have drowned at Sea. Similarly, Lastman So'oula's three channel moving image considers the saturation of liquor stores or fried chicken outlets in high Māori and Pacific demographic neighbourhoods, and the continual erosion of Indigenous lifestyles by threatening colonial and capitalist experiences.

There are works though that consider a way of holding on to traditional knowledge. 'Uhila Kanongata's *Nai's Nena* results from a recent trip to Tonga. Packaging material used to crate gifts on her travels are reworked as the basis of ngatu. Kahurangiariki Smith's pixel video game *FOB*, 2016, sets up a satirical video game in which a fat tourist chucks out dollars to kill natives, but in a defiant twist, can never win the game.

In considering what feels most urgent today, curating has a key role to play. For instance, the proximity of work by Katharine Atafu-Mayo, Tehlor-Lina Mareko and 'Ofa Lehā emphasise elements that are common in their works, such as the female body, heritage rituals and myths, and a desire for open discussion and choice as it relates to the inheritance of cultural understandings of the female body. In a similar way, the closeness of installations by Tyrun Posimani and Jackie Hack reinforce their shared interest in what memories or behaviours materials can engender.

While Raymond's brief seeks work that comments on politics and activism, it also implies a politics within art making. Reflecting upon the process of curating this exhibition collaboratively with the eleven artists, Raymond notes "It wasn't until I talked to them that they grasped that every decision that they make is political". In his *Artforum* essays "Inside the White Cube", Brian O'Doherty rejects the idea of the white cube gallery space as a neutral container, and views it rather as a construct that seeks to erase any of the politics or social realities outside of itself in order to give the art a timeless quality. As such, to seek to provide political commentary within spaces that sit above politics - that continue to operate on a (false) assumption of neutrality - is something that can only be worked out through exhibition making. The presence of the Tautai Tertiary exhibition ensures that this active learning happens at a time when students are well-supported, to tease out what it means to engage in presenting work in public, but within the context of a mentored exhibition.

THE ANNUAL TAUTAI TERTIARY EXHIBITION  
CURATED BY ROSANNA RAYMOND

St Paul St gALLERY

16 AUG - 14 SEPT

'OFA Lehā TAESE John LEAPAI  
NAAWIE Tutugoro KATHARINE  
ATAFU-MAYO Tyrun POSI MANI  
KAHURANGIARIKI Smith JESSIE  
HACK UHILA KANONGATA'A  
NAI TEHLORINA MAREKO DANIEL  
ELISON LASTMAN SO'OUA

creative NZ

TAUTAI

ST PAUL ST AUT

FOUNDATION NORTH

And THEN  
WHAT?

## And THEN WHAT?

ARTIST BIOS AND WORK STATEMENTS

## KATHARINE ATAFU-MAYO

Katharine Atafu-Mayo is best known for her moving image, installation and activation work involving indigenous Samoan practices. She is of afakasi descent; and growing up felt she lacked knowledge around her Samoan heritage. Naturally this drove her creative direction where she has explored, challenged and celebrated her culture. Colonisation, westernization and immigration are aspects she touches on to do so. “To me art isn’t just aesthetic content, it is a tool to inform, spark change and use as a remedial activity.” As her practice has developed Katharine has started to move into a direction where she attempts to create conversation to alter perspectives in hopes to bring action, a social art practice. The healing she has found in creating art is something she wants to gift others, in hopes of leaving this place a little better than it last was.

*Fa’aleagaga, 2018.*

*Two-channel video with installation.*

This body of work aims to demonstrate and create conversation around indigenous religious practices. Anapogi is a pre-missionary and indigenous Samoan practice that refers to the rituals of the evening. It is a ritual that consists of self denial, prayer and meditation involving the denial of food, company, sex and other distractions. The ritual often entailed isolation of self from the village so that the person can contemplate the harmonies and gain spiritual insights. These insights are also known as Moe Manatunatu. The third aspect to this body of work is Fofu, the sacred Samoan art of healing. This involves special medicines made from native plants and trees such as coconut oil; seen below for you to take and use. Through consumption of certain medicines, massage with oils, prayer and a deep connection to the spirits that not everyone can attain, fofu is accomplished. Bringing these rituals that I exercise into the context of the white cube reaffirms that these practices are not a historical remnant but a living part of contemporary society. This work subverts the colonial discourse that has been woven into our cultures and allows us to remember what was stripped from our people so long ago.



## DANIEL ELLISON

Daniel Ellison (Ngāi Tahu) was born, lives and works, in Auckland. Contemporary writing technologies and conventions form the framework of Ellison's practice. Looking to contemporary poetry and literature, Ellison develops systems for shaping linguistic material sourced online and treats making his work as an exercise in information management situated in language. Current work repurposes content from retail brands and the online news media who, in the screen-distracted internet age, have become a constant source of information, misinformation, and influence.

The info-misinfo paradox highlights the intrinsic differences between language, meaning, information, and truth. By appropriating select linguistic material, Ellison examines the presence of stupidity and the sublime in both the content and delivery mechanisms of online publishing platforms. For this show, Ellison created work in response to the various ways Maori and Pacific people are represented in advertising and the news in New Zealand.

*Media Studies, 2018.*

*Ink on newsprint.*

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ENDANGERED  
SURPRISE

RETIRED  
VICTIM

SMYTH  
DEATHS

WOMEN  
TENSIONS

ISLAND  
SHAME

OFF-COLOUR  
STORMS

HIGHEST  
CRIMINAL

MĀORI  
MĀORI

WRONG  
PEOPLE

ACCEPTABLE  
HATE

BILINGUAL  
BABY

INCOMPETENT  
WORK

DEBT  
BINGE

POOR  
PICTURE

MOULDY  
RENTERS

DEADLY  
CHILDREN

POVERTY  
GOAL

THE  
BLAME

INDIGENOUS  
JOB

COMMUNITY  
BEATING

LEGAL  
UTU

FLESH-EATING  
HOMES

FREE  
MESS

TRUTH  
REVIEW

IMAGE  
PROBLEM

FAMILY  
COFFIN

PROBLEM  
FRINGE

## JESSIE HACK

Jessie is a Cook Island/Chinese/Pakeha artist who is interested in inherited cultural memory and in particular the instinctive ancestral knowledge that emerges in art making, relationships and physicality. Her desire to connect with her Whakapapa comes from the cultural gap left by her grandparents immigrating to Aotearoa New Zealand and assimilating into Pakeha culture. Their wish to move into the future, become European, successful and financially secure resulted in Jessie being born in Perth, Western Australia. Jessie has journeyed around the globe searching for her place in the world and recently began to explore her Cook Island Heritage in her art. Jessie works with her own ancestral narrative to propel herself into the future taking with her the strong links to her Whakapapa, the grandeur of the present moment and her ever present desire for transformation.

*Matangaro O Tipuna, 2018.*

'Matangaro O Tipuna' is a series of fabricated heirlooms inspired by my late Cook Island grandmother Mata whose name means 'the disappearing eyes of my ancestors' or 'the view of my ancestors.' Having descended from an Ariki (chief) line in Mauke and with Chinese ancestry from Manihiki, the 'Island of Pearls,' Mata (or Martha, her English name), grew up in a time when those histories were being discarded for new European fashions and ways. Having married a palagi (European) gentlemen and moving to New Zealand, Mata's style was a mingling of fresh European fashion and Cook Island celebration of colour, pattern and texture. Her reputation as 'the most beautiful woman in Rarotonga,' always graceful and elegant, mixed with her infamous volcanic temperament is legendary amongst her family and is all that remains of her legacy. Having grown up in Perth and moved to New Zealand just before Mata's death, I wanted to create the things she may have passed down to me had they not all been lost. After examining photographs and stories from my Father and Uncle, what culminated was a series of taonga (sacred objects) which represented my relationship to her in the present day. A melange of her indigenous glory and her European glamour, these items are not remakes but rather actual sacraments of the things she chose to be as she walked into the future.





## TAIESE JOHN LEAPAI

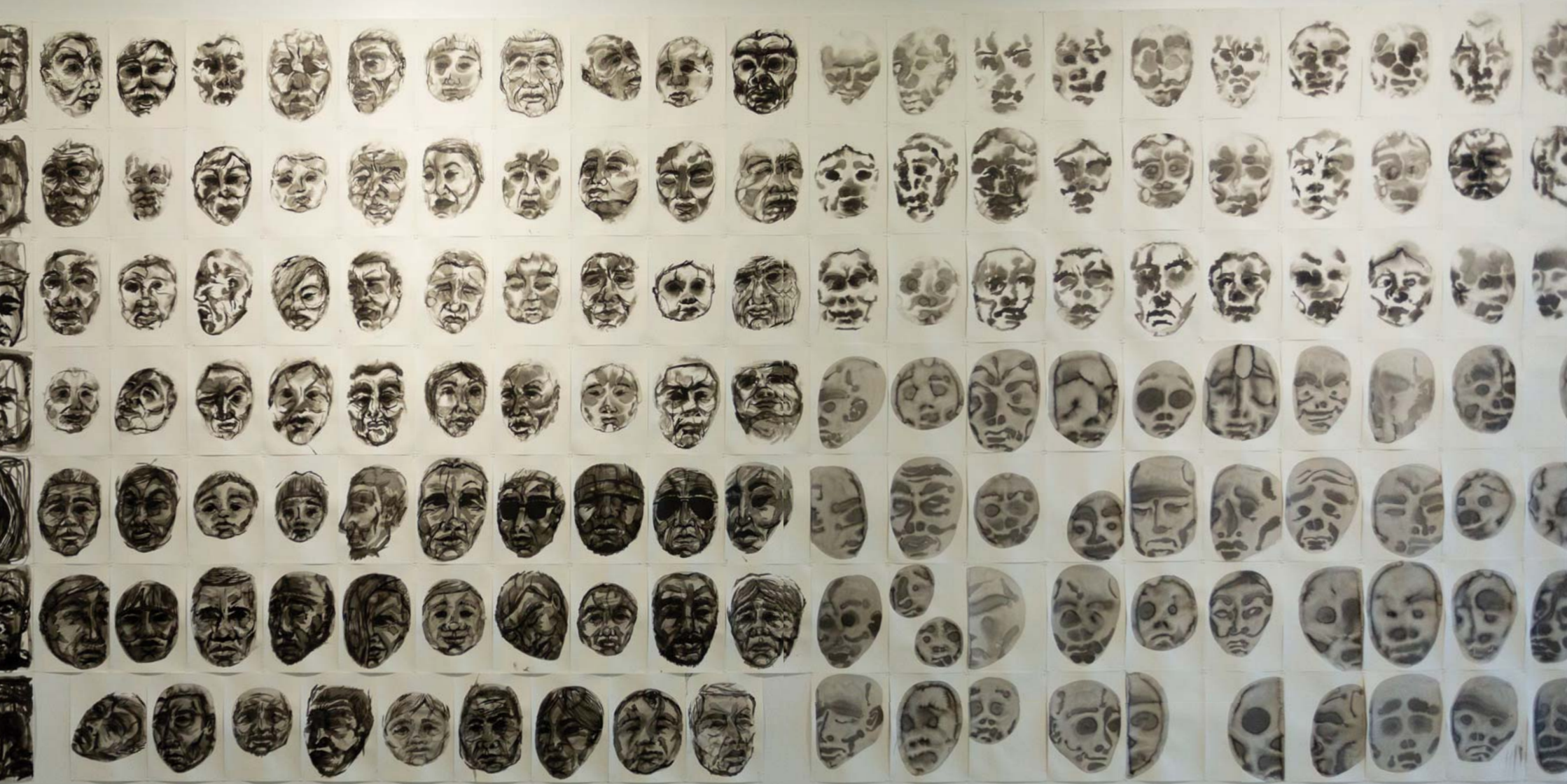
Taiese John Leapai has kept close to the Samoan proverb “O le fuata ma lona lou” [“there is a harvesting pole for every crop”] growing up. The proverb describes how leaders will always arise in every generation. “Growing up as a first-generation NZ-born Samoan has given me rich context and a stepping stone that I continue to use as the basis of my art. The paintings and drawings I create consist mostly of portraiture and the idea of identity, profiles usually based on friends, family and honouring the deceased - always having respect for those who have come before, drawing back layers of genealogy and never forgetting our ancestors.” Taiese’s works in *And Then What?* were made after a family friend’s tragic drowning.

*Fogatai (Surface of the sea), 2018.*

*Ink on paper.*

In 2012, a family friend drowned in a tragic accident. He had leapt into the water to help a struggling child and later was unable to get on shore. In this series of works, I have decided to represent the 209 drownings of Pasifika and Maori people in New Zealand from 2011-2017. The faces range from quite defined to blurry and ghostly. This represents how the definition of our memories fade. I liken this to my concerns around diminishing knowledge of Samoan culture. This is a simple work that remembers these people, but it is also a quiet protest about the post-colonial erasure of Indigenous cultures.





## ‘OFA LEHĀ

‘Ofa Lehā was born in Middlemore Hospital in South Auckland. “After my third birthday, my parents decided to move our family to the USA. My late grandmother who lived there wanted to adopt me because I was her eldest grandchild. I grew up in Los Angeles during my childhood years. After six years, my grandmother passed away and so I returned with my parents to New Zealand for a better living. My siblings and I were born and raised in western society but we have never been to Tonga. Sometimes people think we were born and raised in Tonga from the way we all managed to speak Tongan fluently. Many have asked how we kept the language strong. I believe it all depends on how one’s parents raise their children.

Growing up, my parents never taught us English, so that we could learn how to speak English when we started school. Our number one family rule was that we must only speak Tongan at home and speak English at school or outside the house. When people ask me where I’m from, I get confused and answer back with a question: ‘Where I was born or raised?’ Being born here and raised in the USA has made it hard to calculate where I’m from and where I belong.”

*Toto Pe ‘Ikai (To bleed or not), 2018*

*Video installation with textile, and mixed media.*

Participants are welcomed to experience a space. A space that holds my feelings and perspective towards a ritual that is expected out of me. A ritual that has been set for me since birth. The size of this space emphasises the insecurities about my body that I cannot share with my family just because of their strong beliefs.

Growing up as the only female in my family, it was difficult to find female role models to look up to. When I was told about the ‘white sheet ceremony’, I was shocked and at that moment I started to question a lot of things such as, “What if I don’t bleed?” “Some people don’t bleed on their first time though?”

After talking about the ritual with my family, I understood the beauty, respect and loyalty within this practice. During our family discussion, I realised that myself and my cousins have same point of views that challenged the Tongan perspective but even though they couldn’t answer all our questions, our voices were just voiceless and it wasn’t heard or understood by our elders. I respect my mother and family members that had taken part in this ritual. For myself, I was unsure about this ritual, not that I’m against it but I’m

in between of having to take part and not wanting to take part. Mainly because I’m not comfortable with other people in my community wanting to know about my body. The family I’m from is very strict especially within cultural traditions. So it is a must, to go through with this ritual within our family structure. Because of this, I have felt vulnerable and insecure about my body. The process of the ritual and the publicity outcome of my own sex life is what I knew I had to get ready for.

From this, I developed an art practice that involves raising conversations between today’s generation and the elder generation (Tongan perspective) within the Tongan context, specifically the female role aspect.

My art is a personal response to a Tongan cultural practice adopted from Christian religious ideals, that imposes rules which exposes female privacy.

My work is a dialogue with this cultural practice within a contemporary art space. I aim to do so through using the still common tradition and ritualistic acts of the ‘white sheet ceremony’ a deflowering ritual to prove and display a young women’s virginity in public to show that she is pure. The pure being the label of a supposed virgin or a maiden that states: “you must bleed to show proof of virginity.”

Through my creative practice, I will explore the role of this ceremony within my culture that I am expected to take part in regardless of my own viewpoint and desire to participate. I use body performance as a method for myself to express my feelings and my voice that are not heard and understood in our community. I felt as this was my comfort zone where I believe that my ancestors are listening to our voiceless voices.

My practice acknowledges the idea of the personal and cultural self through my own involvement as a performer using materials used in the ceremony to hold the marks/ stains of the individual. The interaction of materials within the space intends to highlight the exposure that I feel by the lack of privacy, and I also explore the process of working with different materials that are collected and learning to feel how they can interact with each other. Materials that are applied onto my body highlights the knowledge of the ritual being passed down to me by my ancestors. The body movements highlights the sense of embarrassment, sadness, guilt and perhaps happiness that comes with this practice, a ritual full of contradictions which objectifies the female body. Also, the hand movements reference from Tongan tau’olunga that is only performed by a virgin female.



## TEHLOR-LINA MAREKO

Tehlor-Lina Mareko is a multimedia artist who uses photography to investigate subjects of Pacific culture, identity, colonialism, stereotypes and genealogical connections. Tehlor-Lina was born in Auckland, New Zealand in 1994. She lives in Aotearoa/New Zealand. She embraces Samoa as her ancestral and spiritual home and uses that as materials and subject matters for her artworks. The best ideas come from where she comes from, her Samoan heritage has stimulated her artistic ventures, and plays a huge part in the making of her photographs. The gaze is a controversial topic that many Pacific artists including herself emerge themselves in to, often attempting to return the gaze or subvert it. In many of her recent works she has used herself as the subject for all her photographs, intending to provide a language of Native power and freedom in preference to simply a restricted critique of colonial power.

*Toto Masa'a, 2018.*

*Digital photographic prints.*

In the last two terms of 2017, I explored the storytelling of Samoan islands, creating visual representations of what I only knew as fables. I made a book with a series of photos that pay tribute to Samoan characters from legends and myths. My association with each of the characters come from a genealogical connection and a childhood spent listening to stories about these legends and myths. In my work I use contemporary mediums such as photography, which reclaim and explore traditional Pacific cultures and practices demonstrating their influences and roles in society today, globally as well as in the Pacific.

I took interest in the myth of 'Sina and the Eel', as it explains the birth of the first coconut tree. These photos in a way celebrate aspects of the coconut tree through a civilized illustration. All Samoans who know this myth will assure you that there are many moderately different versions of it. The way the story was passed on by word of mouth from village to village was the cause of these differences. It is also interesting in that the origin of the coconut in Samoa is tied to a woman who planted and drank the first milk. 'Sina and the Eel', although simple, is an intricate story with a variety of messages. The more I explored and delved into photographing the story, the more I became aware of the complexities of the messages and morals woven into this simple story which are still relevant to today's world and the Samoan way of life. The rights of a woman to say No. The self sacrifice the eel made because of his love for Sina (parallel to suicides that

occur due to the breakdown of relationships). The blood on Sina's hands and no doubt the guilt she must feel for taking the eel's life. The arrogance of the eel to think that Sina could ever have romantic feelings for it. Even the violence that exists in this story can be a depiction of today's society. It celebrates the sacrifice the eel made. Not to draw parallels to Christianity but it's like the eel is the sacrificial lamb that died for the good of many.

The fa'a Samoa, or traditional Samoan way, remains a strong influence in Samoan life and politics. Despite decades of European influence, Samoa has preserved their historical customs, social and political systems, and language. While most of the major deities in Samoa have lost their status, the mischievous and well-known spirits and creatures of oral traditions have countered Christianity and time.

Throughout this project I have had to adjust being comfortable in front of the camera and differentiating being the "storyteller" as well as the "actor" on set. The gaze is a controversial topic that many Pacific artists emerge themselves into, often attempting to return the gaze or subvert the gaze. In my recent works, I have used myself as the subject for all photographs. Where many of the velvet painters are scandalous for portraying Pacific people from the colonial gaze, I experimented with converting that gaze. In Sina and the Eel an image used in my end of year photobook, where I am seen holding a dead eel while staring straight at the lens, I intended to provide a language of Native power and latitude in preference to simply a restricted critique of colonial authority.







## 'UHILA KANONGATA'A NAI

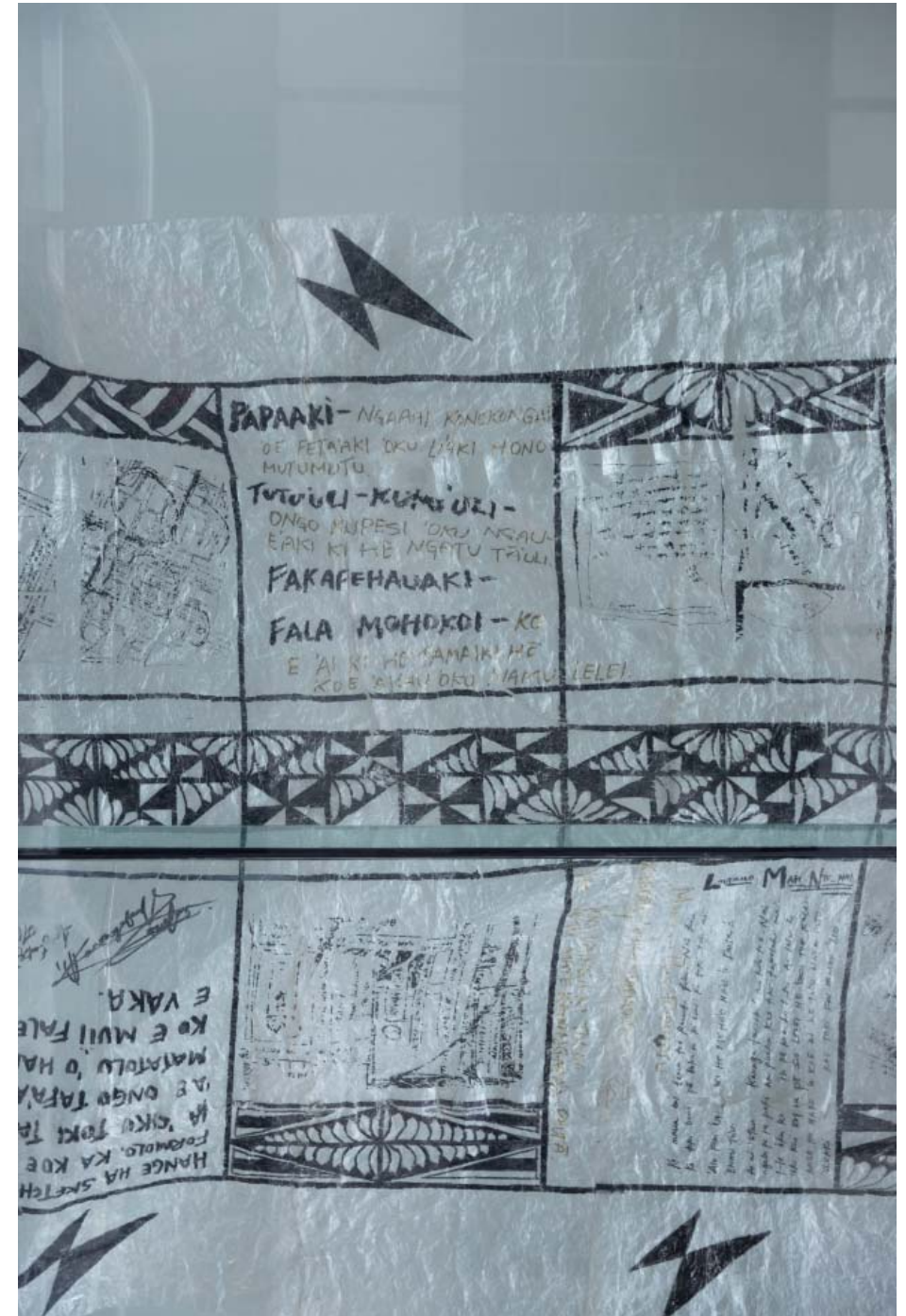
'Uhila Kanongata'a Nai is a Tongan New Zealand born artist, who moved to live in Pelehake, Tongatapu with her Grandma in 1999 until immigrating back to New Zealand aged 13. Nai's focus on traditional craft, in particular, the art of ngatu, seeks to bridge inherent process and contemporary methodology of this intergenerational knowledge. The embodied memory of making, knowledge handed down from her Grandma, was sorted between two contemporary functions of the materials; milemila 'umu and kato lā. The notions of travel and packing are a constant theme in 'Uhila's practice, an action the artist undertook while packing traditional foods bound for New Zealand while growing up in Tonga.

*Nena, 2018.*

*'Umu plastic, and mixed media.*

'Uhila Kanongata'a Nai is a Tongan descended New Zealand born artist, who moved to live in Pelehake, Tongatapu with her Grandma 'Ana Kanongata'a Pauta in 1999 until immigrating back to New Zealand aged 13.

Nai's practice talks about traditional craft, particularly the art of making ngatu in order to seek ways of bridging conversation between inherent process and contemporary methodology of representing intergenerational knowledge. Her embodied memories of making and knowledge handed down from her Grandma enables a translation of these understandings into the form that references the structure of a ngatu. The work 'Nena' introduces a contemporary lens for viewing the art of producing ngatu using material such as milemila 'umu ('umu plastic). The work talks about notions of travel and packing that are also constant themes in 'Uhila's practice. These notions are presented by the action the artist undertook while packing traditional foods bound for family overseas while growing up in Tonga.

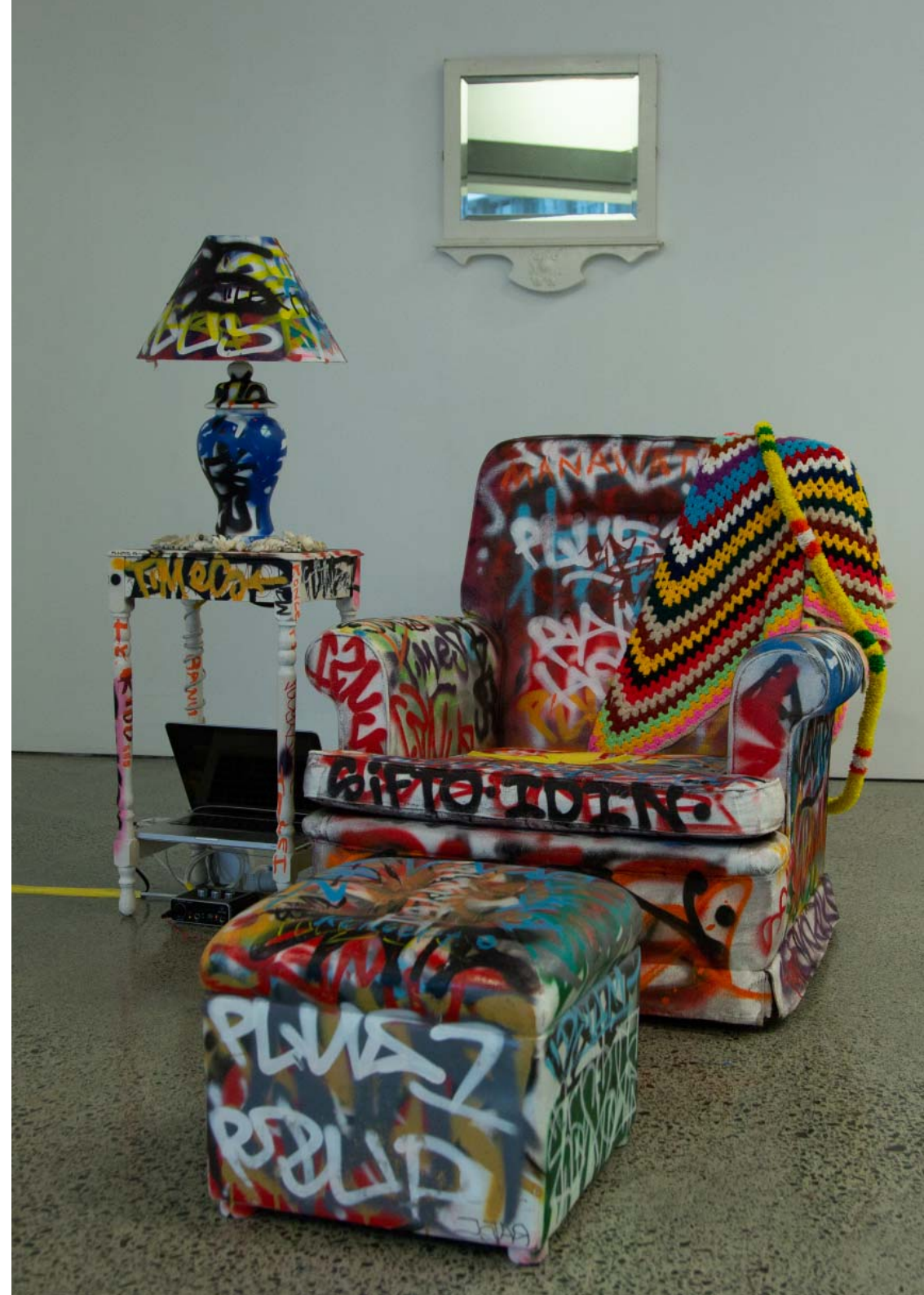


## TYRUN POSIMANI

Tyrun Posimani is an aspiring musician, writer, composer and performer who has always wanted his work to make people feel, to induce some sort of reflection. “Whether that be anger or adoration for me or themselves, tends to matter less to me, so long as what I have created has moved its receiver into thinking. In the pursuit of that dream I am currently in my final year studying commercial music. Most of my time is spent behind a microphone, computer or in a space, creating. Little by little, this creating has gone from mainstream to whatever it is that lives on the other side of that spectrum, and with great love, I have been able to create works that challenged not only my perception of music, art, and performance, but my scope on how these can be used spatially and emotionally.”

*'Still', 2018. Interactive sound installation.*

With thanks to Kakano Youth Arts Collective and Ana Pekapeka Studios. 'Still', an installation depicting the effects of inactivity in a public space. Much too often I have found myself staying idle in situations regarding choice in social and political issues that needed my affirmation. I had always been given the answers of what was right and what was wrong - whether that line was defined by my Catholic upbringing, or Samoan and Niuean heritage, mattered less than the fact that I was equipped only to answer questions my parents had chosen to answer. So being spurred to engage with questions I hadn't been given the answers to, always equated in me sitting on the fence. While this stays true for so many people in their own journeys, after realising this idleness I had grown accustomed to was becoming detrimental to both the social and political work of others and my personal growth, I decided to face this fear, and put it to my art - moving from stage to gallery. Having used contact mics to activate the space, taking a seat leaves you in the silence felt by those awaiting an answer.



## KAHURANGIARIKI SMITH

Kahurangiariki Smith's waka are Te Arawa, Tainui, Takitimu, Horouta and Mataatua. "Being raised with traditional Maori values, I have a keen interest in my heritage and the stories of my ancestors. I engage almost daily with art through the form of university work, my own art practice, helping others with projects, and in working part time at a moko studio. I am inspired by what surrounds me and wish to continue putting more indigenous art out in the world to connect with the histories of other minorities. My art often comes through in digital formats, a reflection of the media we all engage with in person and online, such as gifs and video games. I believe there is power within the intersection of traditional perspectives and contemporary media. Here, within that tension, we may explore the potential for indigenous voices in unlimited ways."

*FOB, 2016.*

*Video game, TV, controller, milk crates, mat.*

*Interactive installation.*

Tupaia, largely unacknowledged in history, was a pivotal figure on James Cook's journey through the Pacific. From Raiatea, Tupaia began to draw and paint using watercolour and graphite, and assisted Cook with navigation and interpreting with tangata whenua across Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa. Until recently, Tupaia was mostly unheard of, only known as 'The Artist of the Chief Mourner'. Nei ra te mihi ki a koe, e te tupuna.

FOB is a classic arcade shooter-style video game. The player is put in the first- person position of the coloniser/tourist. The coloniser throws money at oncoming 'savages' to make them explode. A satirical look on colonisation, there is no way to win the game.

'FOB' aims to recontextualise Tupaia's work into current, engaging mediums. I hope to make the viewer consider the history of colonization, the impact upon cultures across the Pacific, and to challenge the FOB ('fresh off the boat') stereotype.

In 'FOB', I wanted to ask who is off the boat. In fact, Pacific Islanders have been arriving on boats and traversing across the islands for such a long time that we became quite good at it. Maori arrived to Aotearoa on boats and still acknowledge Hawaiiki as our place of origin, but the location of where Hawaiiki is shifts with whakapapa, stories, and beliefs. Regardless, we too are Pasifika. What we all have connecting us is our whakapapa to each other, our whanaungatanga, and Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa. Tupaia served as another connector between the islands, which is why he was embraced so long ago and why we should still embrace each other as cousins. Since those times, Pakeha arrived on boats, and today more refugees are arriving of boats (and planes). These are important histories and realities to be aware of, so that we can take care of one another with more compassion and less prejudice.





## LASTMAN SO'OUA

Lastman Sooula is a New Zealand born Samoan. "My father is from Fasito'ò Uta, Upolu, and my mother is from Safune, Savai'i. I am a mixed-media contemporary artist. I recently graduated from the University of Auckland, at the Elam School of Fine Arts, with a Bachelors Degree in Fine Arts (Honours), and I am currently studying for my Masters, also at Elam. My art practice has been primarily based on the complexities of the urban Pacific Islander experience. This is shown through the exploration of the cause and effects of colonisation, and how our past continues to impact our people today, the shift in culture and its inevitable change. As a spoken-word artist with the South Auckland Poets Collective, I use poetry as a foundation for my artworks, and perform poetry as a contemporary way to reconnect with my ancestral oratory roots."

*Epidemiologicalpolytical, 2018.*

*Three-channel video installation with poem.*

epidemiologicalpolytical

(adjective) relating to the study of, systematic and/or political influence in the incidence, distribution and possible control of the diseases and other factors relating to Polynesian community health issues

This particular project explores the effects of urbanisation with a particular focus on Polynesian communities and their health issues using spoken word poetry and moving images to portray these issues in a contemporary art practice.

Being a New Zealand born Samoan has come with it many opportunities and also challenges. One of the big challenges Polynesian migrants face is integration into a new culture. For the children of those migrants, balancing the culture of their heritage and that of growing up in a Western society brings new obstacles to overcome. My art practice is based on a conversation within myself as a New Zealander and a Samoan. Samoa, as well as other Polynesian nations, have an oral tradition which has been used to tell stories of origins, myths and legends.

Based on the loss of my father due to diabetes, I investigate the outstanding amount of unhealthy stores surrounding my community which has contributed to the high risk of Polynesian people contracting such diseases. I have based my research on statistical and personal findings resulting in a poetry reading performance, and moving images to add a visual element.

### epidemiologicalpolytical

by Lastman So'oula

My Grandfather was a fisherman  
He fed his family by the strength of his net  
The accuracy of his spear  
The Pacific Ocean was his provider

*"O wind of the Southern Seas Guide his sail, let his catch be plenty  
May the skill of his forefathers manifest in his hands  
Ancestral stars, show him the way  
Be a beacon for him to follow  
O sacred earth, let his sons work your land  
May the fruits of their labour be plentiful"*

I sent selfish incantations to the earth and sea  
With hopes that altering the past could change the present  
A present without...

My Father would tell me stories of his childhood  
Of he and his brother being carried in woven flax baskets  
Over their father's shoulders  
"My father's strength was different" he would say,  
His voice cracking while he would recollect his memories  
Pausing, just for a moment  
As if he was taking a moment of silence, I could tell, he hasn't spoken  
to anyone about this for a long time  
Reflecting on the time...  
My parents were part of the later wave of Polynesian migration  
They came from paradise to see if the grass was greener  
Greener than the plantations  
Taro patches and banana leaves  
Greener than the leaves of the breadfruit tree  
But the only thing greener was the currency  
The concrete here is harder to walk on  
My mother cleaned homes and my father worked security  
And so they worked this new land 12 hours, that doesn't leave much  
time for family  
Home-cooked meals became a Sunday thing  
But for the rest of the week it was...

Break out the take-out  
 Did you know that for just \$10 you can get:  
 3 x fish  
 3 x hotdogs  
 3 x potato fritters AND 3 x chips  
 OR For \$13.50 you can get  
 5 x fish  
 5 x sausages  
 And \$5 chips  
 Just a quick trip down the road  
 The fish are easier to catch nowadays  
 No nets or spears needed  
 I wonder if our grandfathers would be proud of us  
 Children of the late night cruise  
 Drunk night looking for an open drive thru  
 And there is plenty round here  
 Just follow the neon lights  
 Google map 'Fast food in South Auckland'  
 And watch the different markers light up like stars  
 These digital constellations in the cyber-space are our new beacons  
 I wonder if our ancestors would be proud of...

The past 10 years 1 in 10 Pacific adults have been diagnosed with diabetes  
 3 times that of non-pacific  
 Life expectancy 5 Years less than the rest of the nation  
 High risk of sickness involving our health  
 Poor nutrition because the lack of choices due to lack of wealth  
 And they keep regurgitating these, numbers, figures, statistics and surveys  
 But keep filling our neighbourhoods with liquor stores fish'n'chips, takeaways  
 And all they do is take away, time,  
 See the drive thru lines move  
 Like funeral processions  
 And around and around we go  
 With no sign of progression  
 Around and around we go  
 No answers, just more questions  
 Numbers  
 Graphs  
 Stats  
 Just more things for us to count, rather than to count on...



But when does it become your reality?  
 Is it when you ask the hospital for his medical records?  
 And you walk out with 8 volumes of paperwork  
 Is it when the smell of sanitizer makes you nauseous?  
 It reminds you of what his hospital room smelt like  
 Is it the irritating sound of heart monitors?  
 It reminds you of when his one no longer made a sound  
 Is it when they tell you it was genetic?  
 Meaning his death was because his father's blood was tainted  
 And the only heirloom you are left with is a disease  
 So you're destined to have the same fate  
 To taste Deaths sweeter kiss  
 Wouldn't that be a shame?  
 Wouldn't that be a tragedy?  
 Around and around we sail,  
 Praying,

*"O wind of the Southern Seas Guide his sail, let his catch be plenty  
 May the skill of his forefathers manifest in his hands  
 Ancestral stars, show him the way  
 Be a beacon for him to follow  
 O sacred earth, let his sons work your land  
 May the fruits of their labour be plentiful"*

end.

## NAAWIE TUTUGORO

Naawie Tutugoro looks at sequences of mapping on a personal, spiritual and site-specific scale. Through modes of foraging and survival, mediums are made of the suburban landscape. The sculptural drawings are grounded by her intuition with references to methods of indigenous architecture. Maintaining relevancy and relativity, Naawie keeps her material presence localised and specific to an experience or memory. Works are characteristically hybrid and minimal with an ontological presence of diaspora. "As a brown body, I am concerned with how much space I take up. This prompted a way of mapping that does not come at the expense of anyone/anything."

*who will buy my jpegs?, 2018.*

*Video, soundtrack: Naughty Boy by Career Girls.*

N: I think it was questions around the word 'Nigga' and whether I could use that cause I was always told I could use that from people because 'Oh you're brown so you can say that, but I can't because I'm white' and then the more that I sort like looked into it and thought about it and I wanted to use it in these public spaces, somewhere like a gallery or for the title of an exhibition you're like.. you don't just go and do it, you stop yourself and you.. cause you know that there's something ughh.. about it, rather than just doing it and I think that was like.. that's like the thing that's like rea.. that I kind of go in and out of with this work is like 'is it wrong? or is it all good?..

A: No, I love it!.. and then you watch it uh yeah.. every time you watch and you watch it again and you watch it again and you see different things pop out and its like..you feel located in New Zealand then you pop out and then you come back and then you pop out.. and its kind of just this and umm like.. yeah.. I don't know.. yeah..

N: And they're not even my jpegs you know, that's like the point.

A: But I think that's cool like in terms of like umm of cul.. like in terms of tying it into like um colonisation maybe? is that like maybe that Pakeha or colonisation they took so much away from us and it's like you're like taking all this stuff and claiming it or like putting your mark on it and this is like, this is Naawie's work you know? and putting it in that space like I don't know.. I like the title, its cool.

A: So its not like foraging for actual objects and wooden things in the physical world, its like you're foraging on the internet which is another world and you're just collecting and like putting this stuff together.. yeah.

N: Internet foraging..yeah that's a good way to describe it. I was sort of talking about that when I was like site.. when I think of being site specific and like when I'm online I can still be 'site specific' like I can be specific to like.. you know.. do you use Pinterest?





## Wahine, Fafine, Fefine, Vahine

To all our grandmothers, mothers, aunts, daughters and to all the men who have supported us and care for us we thank you for the mana you have gifted us.

From our public programme we gathered a list of names, of Wahine, Fafine, Fefine, Vahine that we wanted to acknowledge and pay tribute to – and they are:

- ✧ *Ana Pakiamala Afu - Lehā* ✧ *Ani O'Neill* ✧ *Dr Aroha Yates Smith* ✧
- ✧ *Hon. Carmel Sepuloni* ✧ *Carmen Rupe* ✧ *Ema Siopo* ✧ *Emily Mafile'ò* ✧
- ✧ *Emma Kalanikaumaka`amano Kaleleonālani Na`ea Rooke* ✧ *Feeonaa Wall* ✧
- ✧ *Felicia Fetalaiga Atafu* ✧ *Fiji womens Rights movement* ✧
- ✧ *Fijian Women Crisis Centre* ✧ *Georgina Beyer* ✧ *Grace Mera Molisa* ✧
- ✧ *Grace Teuila Taylor* ✧ *Haunani-Kay Trask* ✧ *Hine-nui-te-pō* ✧
- ✧ *Hinemoana* ✧ *Hinetitama* ✧ *Hinetuahoanga* ✧ *Jahra 'Rager' Wasasala* ✧
- ✧ *Jaunnie Ilolahia* ✧ *Joy Vaele* ✧ *Karlo Mila* ✧ *Kolokesa U. Māhina-Tuai* ✧
- ✧ *Kuramarotini* ✧ *Ladi 6* ✧ *Linda Tuhiwai Smith* ✧ *Lindah Le Pou* ✧
- ✧ *Lisa Reihana* ✧ *Luisa Tora* ✧ *Marama Davidson* ✧ *Marama T- Pole* ✧
- ✧ *Mary Ama* ✧ *Mary Mayo* ✧ *Dr Melani Anae* ✧ *Merata Mita* ✧ *Moana Maniapoto* ✧
- ✧ *Nafanua* ✧ *Nga atua wahine o Te Moananui a Kiwa* ✧ *Ngāhuia Murphy* ✧
- ✧ *Ngāhuia Te Awekotuku* ✧ *Niwareka* ✧ *Niwhai Tupaea* ✧ *Pelehonuamea* ✧
- ✧ *Pepe Atafu-Mayo* ✧ *Petrina Togi-Sa'ena* ✧ *Phylesha Brown-Acton* ✧
- ✧ *Precious Clark* ✧ *Pusi Urale* ✧ *Queen Salote Tupou III* ✧ *Rosanna Raymond* ✧ ✧
- ✧ *Seline Forsyth* ✧ *Shigeyuki Kihara* ✧ *Sia Figiel* ✧ *Sina Brown-Davis* ✧
- ✧ *Suzanne Tamaki* ✧ *Talitha Project* ✧ *Te Kuraimonoa* ✧ *Teresia Teaiwa* ✧
- ✧ *The Pacifica Mamas* ✧ *Therese Mangos* ✧ *Tuafale Tanoa'i aka Linda T* ✧
- ✧ *Tuaiwa Hautai 'Eva' Rickard* ✧ *Vaoga Lelelua Mary Watts* ✧ *Vea Mafile'ò* ✧
- ✧ *Dame Whina Cooper* ✧

## 'Ofa 'a e Fa'ē, A Mothers Love

*Kolokesa U. Māhina-Tuai*

There is a Tongan belief that we walk forward into the past and backwards into the future, both of which are constantly mediated in the changing present, where the past is put in front as a guiding principle and the future, situated behind, is brought to bear on past experiences.<sup>1</sup> Too often we allow our thinking and practices in the present to be dominated by foreign and imposed philosophies, knowledge and practices that underestimate the value to be gained from being informed by the past. To truly understand the role of Tongan women in the arts today, here in Aotearoa New Zealand, needs to account and be informed by the knowledge and role of Tongan women in the past. This is best understood within the wider context of the gender division of tasks between men and women, which played and still plays a central role in Tongan society.

The division of tasks are best expressed in the following proverbial sayings<sup>2</sup>: 'Oku fakahokohoko toto 'a fafine kae fakahokohoko hingoa 'a tangata translated as 'Blood passes through women and title passes through men'. This acknowledges the strength in the role of women, which is genetically led and the role of men which is socially driven.

<sup>1</sup> Kolokesa Māhina-Tuai, "Looking Backwards Into Our Future: Reframing 'Contemporary' Pacific Art." In *Home AKL: Artists of Pacific Heritage in Auckland*, Ron Brownson, Kolokesa Māhina-Tuai, Albert L. Refit, Ema Tavola and Nina Tonga, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki: Auckland, N.Z. 2012, p. 34. This quote includes a slight addition from the source of the original quote, Hūfanga, Professor 'Okusitino Māhina, November 12. Also refer to 'Epeli Hau'ofa, "Epilogue: Pasts to Remember" in *Remembrance of Pacific Pasts: An Invitation to Remake History*, edited by Robert Borofsky, (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000), 453-471.

<sup>2</sup> The proverbs and their translations in this article were provided by Hūfanga Professor 'Okusitino Māhina. For more information on Tongan proverbs see 'Okusitino Māhina, *Reed Book of Tongan Proverbs: Ko e Tohi 'a e Reed Ki He Lea Tonga Heliaki*, Reed Publishing (NZ) Ltd 2004.

<sup>3</sup> However, these gender divisions are not hierarchical or to do with status, but rather simply based on difference and the necessary tasks that are individually carried out for the benefit of the collective, the family. This is highlighted in the proverbial saying: ‘Oku tókanga ‘a tangata pea ‘oku manga, kae falehanga ‘a fafine pea ‘oku hanga,” and translated into “Men belong in the land, measured by the feet, and women belong in the house, measured by the hands.” A woman’s responsibilities and obligations are carried out in the house from: sexual intimacies to giving birth; nurturing and teachings of her children; to the production of material wealth, in order to fulfil her obligations, such as nimamea’a koka’anga (fine arts of barkcloth making) and nimamea’a lālanga (fine arts of weaving). The role of women as mothers is best articulated in the proverb faka’olunga he kaliloa, literally meaning resting the head on the kaliloa (headrest), in reference to a mothers’ long arms upon which her children are taught through a mothers’ whispers and story-telling, and where they sleep on. The nurturing, teachings and sacrifices of a mother is referred to as fa’ē ‘ofa or loving mother.

The exhibition *And Then What?* curated by Rosanna Raymond involved two young women artists of Tongan heritage, ‘Ofa Lehā and ‘Uhila Kanongata’a Nai – both addressing the role of Tongan women within their respective works.<sup>4</sup> Lehā’s work is a personal commentary of her own current experience and journey around the Tongan cultural practice of ‘api that she is expected to go through.<sup>5</sup> Nai’s work draws on the knowledge and practice of nimamea’a koka’anga that she learned while living with her grandmother in Tonga.

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3 Personal communication with Hūfanga Professor ‘Ōkusitino Māhina, Saturday 6 October, 2018.

4 <http://www.tautai.org/and-then-what/>

5 See the following article by Inez Manu-Sione on her experience of learning about the practice of ‘api and then going through with the process as part of her marriage ritual as a Tongan woman. <http://www.stuff.co.nz/life-style/love-sex/8839889/The-virgin-sheet-ceremony> June 26, 2013.

The critical commentary of Lehā’s work, and the acknowledgement of intergenerational knowledge and practice passed down, in Nai’s work, are couched in foreign arts institutional languages; and are really only touching the surface of their respective topics. The depth and breadth of these works, and any works by women artists of Tongan heritage here in Aotearoa referencing Tongan cultural practices, would be gained from not only being informed by the past, but also from an Indigenous Tongan knowledge system.<sup>6</sup> In doing so they would understand that their topics of investigation are very much rooted in the knowledge and practice of ‘ofa ‘a e fa’ē, a mothers’ love.<sup>7</sup>

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6 For more information of Tongan arts and particularly Tongan women’s arts, refer to Kolokesa Uafā Mahina-Tuai & Manuēsina ‘Ofa-Ki-Hautolo Māhina, *Nimamea’a: The fine arts of Tongan embroidery and crochet* exhibition catalogue, held at Objectspace, 19 November – 22 December 2011, at Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand.

7 The thinking around this short text was informed by the author’s work in progress at the time called *Kaliloa: Fa’ē ‘Ofa, Loving Mothers*, as part of her artist contribution to the 4th International Biennial of Casablanca in Morocco 2018 that will open in late October 2018.

## the backbones

*Katharine Atafu-Mayo*

Po - Past

Po - Present

Po - Future

our wahine

our fafine

our fefine

our vahine

the Karanga, the call of the heart, the first voice you hear is hers,  
the Taupou, the village princess that was able to walk through war zones without  
being touched,  
the Fahu, the most respected and honoured in her family,  
the Na liga ni magiti, the hands and feet that sustain us,

she is a wild energy that runs deep in your soul  
a wise whisper  
a guiding force that demands to be heard  
a lot of them sleep but not in silence  
they are with you right now  
listen  
she is you and you are her  
intersecting entities  
our blood tainted by past hurt  
yet the pungent fragrance of mana lingers  
it leaves a distaste in the other mouths  
transform that flavour by pushing air vibrations out into the va

talanoa

we exchange

we restore

we exist

we envision anew

the patients become the healers  
we balm our ancestors' wounds with their own knowledge  
we become the incubator  
we breathe life into the buried and hidden  
we gather the bones of our herstories  
we anoint them divinely because you see,  
we are the knowledge holders that keep our culture alive  
and love is our currency

Aroha

Alofa

Ofa

Loloma

Po – Past

Po - Present

Po - Future

## And THeN WHaT?

**Curator:** Rosanna Raymond

**Gallery:** ST PAUL St Gallery

Galleries One and Two

Level 1 WM Building

40 St Paul Street

School of Art and Design

Auckland University of Technology

**Opening:** 16 August

**Exhibition Dates:** 17 August to 14 September

**Artists:** Katharine Atafu-Mayo, Daniel Ellison, Jessie Hack, Taiese John Leapai, 'Ofa Lehā, Tehlor-Lina Mareko, 'Uhila Kanongata'a Nai, Tyrun Posimani, Kahurangiariki Smith, Lastman So'oula, Naawie Tutugoro

### Public programme

Tertiary student day: Friday 17 August

Wahine, Fafine, Fefine, Vahine Fono: Wednesday 29 August

Kava Korero: Thursday 6 September

Co-edited by Rosanna Raymond and Petrina Togi-Sa'ena

Publication Design by Eric Smith

Exhibition Artwork by Robert George

All images by Emily Clote, except for pages 31-33 and 39 used courtesy of the artists

Printed by Centurion Print

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