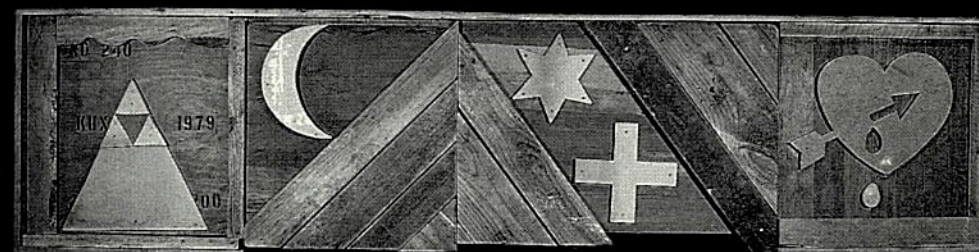
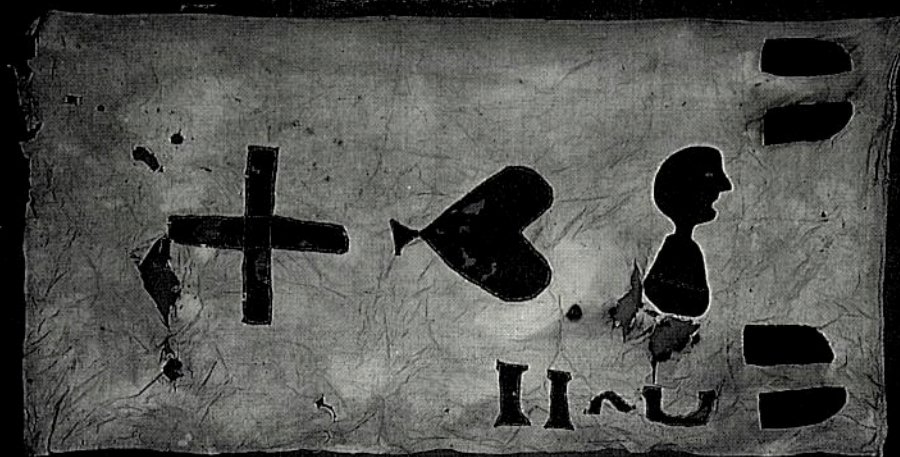




# W ♦ A ♦ R

*w h a t u a b o r u a*



*a weaving together of traditional  
and contemporary taonga*

W ♦ A ♦ R

*whatu a h o r u a*



## Acknowledgements

T A N D A N Y A



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### front cover

Top:  
Laurence Aberhart  
*Hau Hau Flag, Nelson, 1983*  
(courtesy Nelson College for Boys)  
black and white photograph 140 x 240mm  
Collection: The Artist

Bottom:  
Para Matchitt  
*Flag 1984*  
wooden assemblage 3300 x 800mm  
Collection: Sarjeant Gallery

### back cover

Selwyn Muru  
*Archway for Henry Moore 1986*  
exotic timber 2435 x 2335 x 380mm  
Collection: Auckland City Art Gallery

### title page

Kuwaha, carved wooden doorway, from Parikino on the Whanganui River, Te Ati Haunui a Paparangi. (Collection: Wanganui Regional Museum).

W ♦ A ♦ R

*w h a t u a b o r u a*

## Foreword

Over the past 200 years Eastern Pacific indigenous cultures have undergone the profound impact of colonization. Each of the Pacific cultures have coped with this impact in their own unique ways. This exhibition is a celebration of the culture that has survived, the peoples, their courage, resilience and beauty.

Although in both Australia and Aotearoa the indigenous people are in the minority, the strength and uniqueness of their cultures has remained a dominant and increasingly powerful force within the contemporary life of their respective countries.

In recent decades Aboriginal and Maori cultures have undergone remarkable cultural revivals in ceremony, music, theatre, film and the visual arts.

Whatu Aho Rua affirms identity for both the Maori artists whose work will be represented and the

Aboriginal people who will have their first major opportunity to share in the diversity of contemporary Maori culture.

For non-indigenous visitors to Tandanya the exhibition will demonstrate the strength and brilliance of the cultures of the Pacific.

Tandanya, the National Aboriginal Cultural Institute, is proud to host this exhibition as part of our 1992 Adelaide Festival programme and we welcome this opportunity to develop greater ties with our near neighbours.

*Garnet Wilson*  
Chairman  
National Aboriginal Cultural Institute

## Introduction

WHATU AHO RUA as an exhibition is developing a considerable history. In 1989 the first major project undertaken by our then Curator, Rangihiroa Panoho, was *Whatu Aho Rua* which is a weaving term used to describe the knitting together of two strands of dressed flax in Maori cloak-making. The expression ideally conveyed the curatorial concept Rangihiroa developed by drawing together historical and contemporary Maori art objects. The 1989 exhibition was gathered to complement an independently selected exhibition of work by 13 contemporary Maori artists titled *Te Ao Maori*. The national response to these exhibitions was substantial and resulted in the massive task of presenting the exhibition later in the year at the Dowse Art Museum in Lower Hutt.

During the latter half of 1990, Rangihiroa was fortunate to be invited on a month's secondment to Manly Art Gallery and Museum through the support of the Manly Rotary Club and Wanganui District Council. He had the opportunity to travel in Australia and visited Tandanya, where there was a strong interest in his redeveloping *Whatu Aho Rua* to be part of Tandanya's programme for the 1992 Adelaide Festival.

Since then considerable negotiations, planning, funding support and effort on both sides of the Tasman have seen the bringing together of this reworking of *Whatu Aho Rua*.

I would like to acknowledge all who have been responsible for its achievement: Rangihiroa for his curating the new selection and writing of the key catalogue essay (most of this undertaken during his own time subsequent to moving on from the Sarjeant Gallery staff in September 1991), all those associated with Tandanya who responded so favourably to the exhibition concept, and those who have subsequently helped drive the project toward achievement – particularly Julian Bowron, John Kean and, more recently, Kerry Comerford.

I would also like to acknowledge the important assistance of Kate Pinkham in loan negotiation and publication development, and all of my staff and

contract workers who have put in many hours to prepare and crate the exhibition in a short time frame and under considerable pressure from other work commitments.

None of this would have been possible, however, without the very generous support of the many lenders and artists who have loaned work at relatively short notice. All are acknowledged directly in the catalogue listing but again thank you for supporting the project so positively.

In particular, the Wanganui Regional Museum has generously made a considerable number of taonga available. I wish to acknowledge the significance of this support and equally the support of the Kaumatua Council in responding with such positive care and concern for the taonga. We are grateful to the kaumatua who will be accompanying the exhibition to Tandanya, and to Te Waka Toi for their funding assistance with this.

While the bulk of the funding for the project is from the Australia Council, via Tandanya, I would like to acknowledge the support of both the New Zealand Ministry of External Relations and Trade and the Australia-New Zealand Foundation who have provided funding to assist with the crating of the exhibition. They have also supported the concept of touring *Whatu Aho Rua* to other Australian venues.

To this end, the exhibition will be showing at the Canberra School of Art Gallery from June 12 to July 3 and the Ivan Dougherty Gallery in Sydney from August 8 to September 5.

This exhibition provides a unique opportunity for new international audiences to receive a fresh and contemporary reading of one of the world's most dynamic cultures and I am pleased that Wanganui, the Wanganui Regional Museum, and the Sarjeant Gallery have had a significant role in its achievement.

*Bill Milbank*  
Director  
Sarjeant Gallery



*"The time may come when new designs will be evolving according to the impulses of individual craftsmen." – Apirana Ngata <sup>1</sup>*

*"The Maori artist of yesterday created within the constraints of a single culture. Now the Maori artist operates within a multiplicity of cultures. The tools and materials have changed... the models of past artforms are sometimes frustrating for the artist of the present. Yet sustenance can also be drawn from them. Even when not used directly, the proven symbols of the past provide models by which new symbols may be judged." – John Ford <sup>2</sup>*

**T**HIS LATE nineteenth century photograph entitled *Some Maori Exhibits* (cat. no. 46) documents probably most of the taonga Maori in the care of the Wanganui Public Museum in 1899. It also includes one of the most impressive taonga (treasures) in the exhibition, a Pou Tokomanawa (central ridgepole support post, cat. no. 3) depicted to the left of this composition. This tupuna (ancestor) figure, along with many of the other taonga in the image, was collected from Whanganui (Te Atihaunui a Paparangi) and its tribal surrounds. Some of the exhibits were collected by S.H. Drew (Honorary Curator of the

Wanganui Public Museum at the time). The venue is the present day Savage Club Hall. The photograph then is of local historical significance but more importantly the image has wider relevance – in the way it documents an early European presentation of Maori taonga in this country. These objects missing their tribal context are “the proven symbols of the past” which Ford refers to. A wide range of Maori material culture has been stage-managed here in a way that is

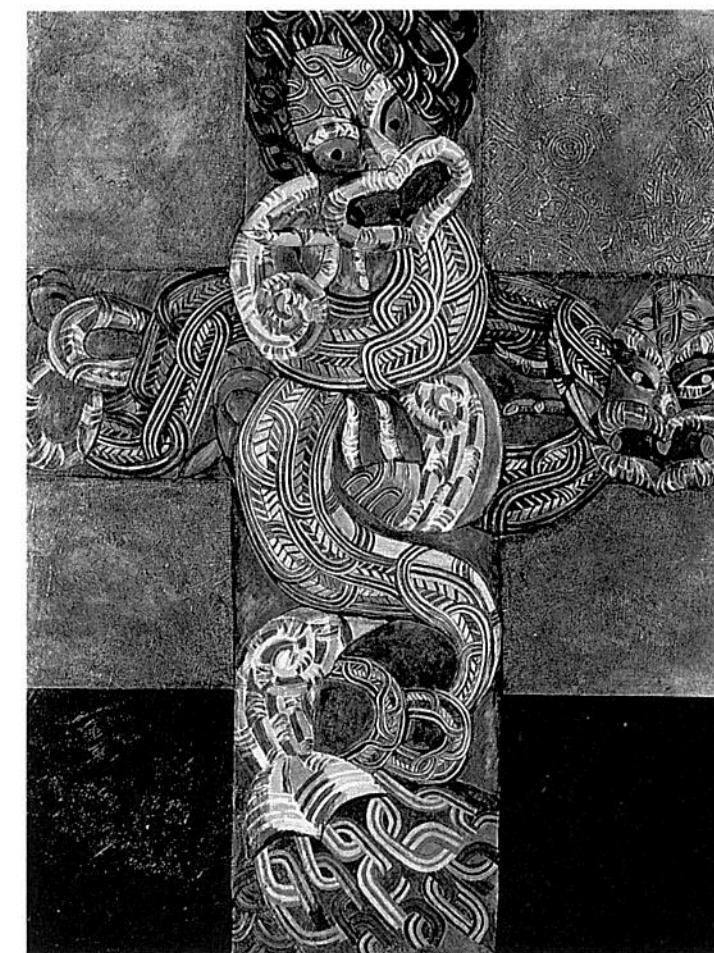
*Some Maori Exhibits, Wanganui Public Museum, 1899. (Photograph courtesy of National Museum, Wellington)*



unusually foreign to Maori usage and presentation. The composition is carefully organised, like a theatre set. There is a strong sense of spatial planning – foreground, mid - foreground and background. There is a hierarchy of scale – flat weapons and striking implements and ceremonial adzes – patu pounamu (nephrite hand weapon), wahaika (wood or bone hand weapon), toki (adze), toki pou tangata (ceremonial adze), patu muka (flax beater) – taonga associated with the Whanganui river – tiheru (bailer), tauihu (carved canoe prow), hinaki (wicker eel pot), the diagonals of hoe (paddle). And at the back exalted and central, the most revered form of Maori art: te toi whakairo – larger pieces of meeting and storehouse carving – poupou (side post inside a house), kuwaha pataka (food store doorway), and tahuhu (ridgepole).

*Left: Poupou, panel carved in wood, Ngati Whatua, (Collection: Wanganui Regional Museum, John Barnicoat Wall Memorial Collection).*

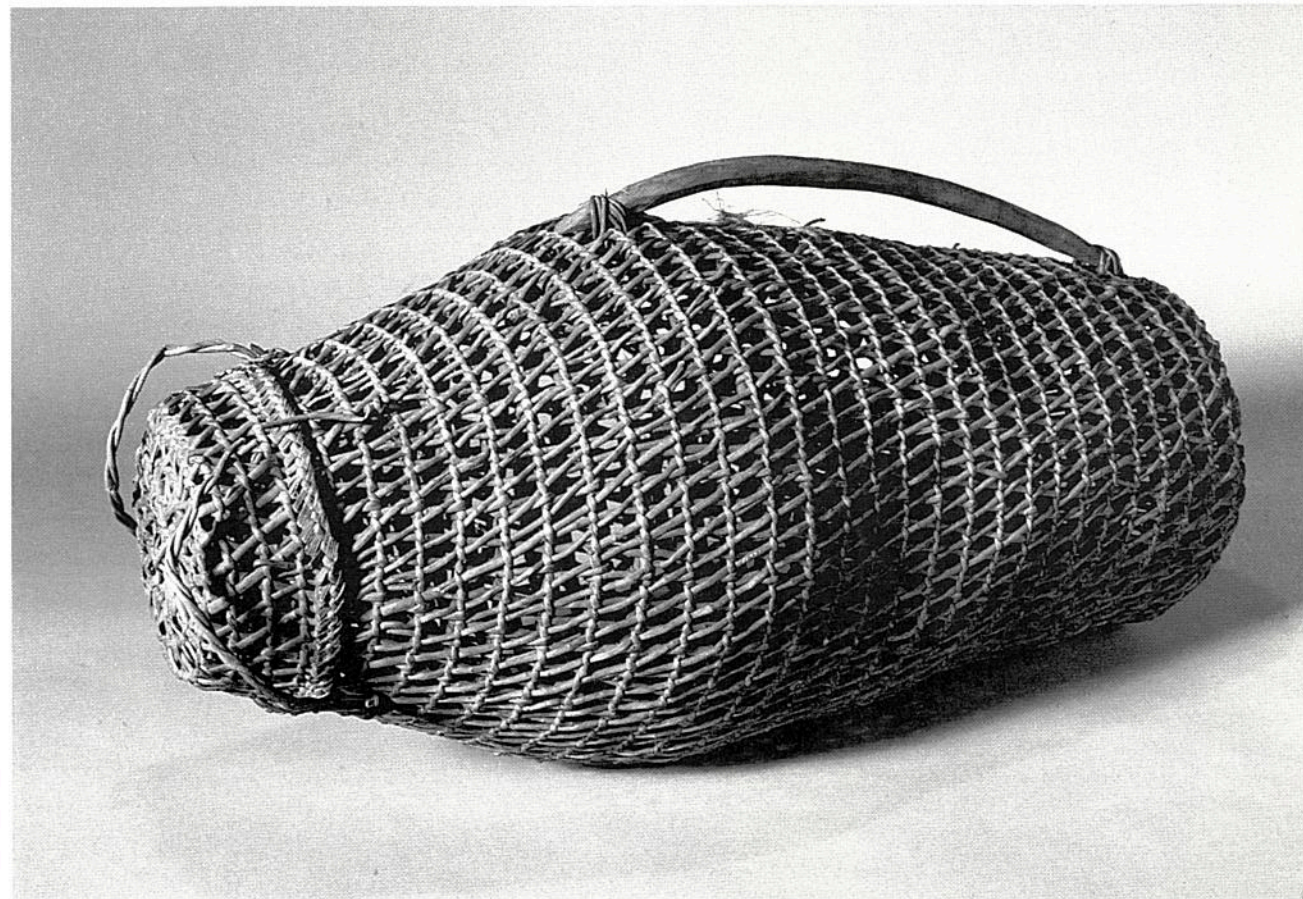
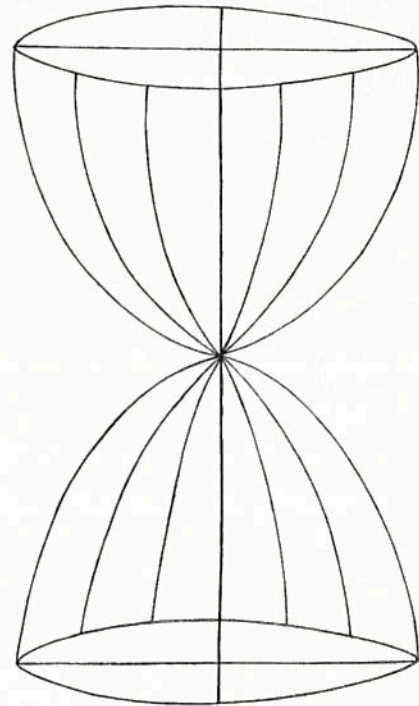
*Below: Kura Te Waru Rewiri: Te Ripeka – Crucifixion 1985, acrylic on board. (Collection: Waikato Museum of Art and History, Hamilton).*



In their tribal context such carvings were often left to return to Papatuanuku (the Earth Mother) once they had performed their function (i.e religious, architectural, pragmatic). The fact that these more perishable types of taonga continue to exist in Aotearoa and overseas is largely due to the efforts of museum collectors like Drew and those who followed him who have helped accumulate and care for such treasures. They are an invaluable reference point for Maori artists today. The main concern with work from such collections is that they have become conservative models for present day Maori art, not simply models of the past. Both Maori and Pakeha scholars have wrongly imbued older (i.e pre-European) taonga with orthodox and classical attributes it never wholly possessed. The innovation and change which once characterised Maori art and its development is being threatened by a need felt by the purist to preserve and imitate that which is thought to be 'traditional' Maori art.

Drew's collection of these objects took place amidst similar concerns for cultural preservation.

Right: Matt Pine: Trap series drawing 1982, graphite on paper. (Collection: the artist, Palmerston North).  
Below: Hinaki, woven eel net from Pipiriki, on the Whanganui River, Te Ahi Haunui a Paparangi. (Collection: Wanganui Regional Museum).



It was a commonly held belief in the late nineteenth century that Maori culture and the people themselves were in decline and would not survive the process of European colonisation (loss of land and morale, introduced diseases, high mortality rate). Collecting and photographing taonga (in the nineteenth century) might be seen as part of this Western tendency to seek to preserve what may become a loss, what may not survive.

But Maori culture has survived into the twentieth century. Maori artists are either involved with restoring the traditions of the past or taking them in new directions to ensure their continuation. *Whatu Aho Rua* seeks to look at an increasing number of Maori artists who since the 1950s have sought to present their own innovative and not simply imitative responses to both taonga tuku iho (treasures handed down) and European art. The show picks up on both Western and Maori threads of influence in their work. The term *whatu aho rua* (a weaving expression used to describe the knitting together of two paired strands of processed flax in the making of cloaks) alludes to the similar multiplicity of strands present in the makeup of contemporary Maori art. This exhibition affirms the ability of Maori art to weave new outside cultural influences into the kaupapa (foundation fabric) of Maori traditions.

The exhibition, like the display in the nineteenth century photograph, involves an organisation of mainly Whanganui-based taonga. While their presentation is similarly considered, premeditated and deliberate, the objectives are quite different. Taonga is here juxtaposed with contemporary artwork – sculpture, printing, pottery, painting, drawing, assemblage and installation – to show its ongoing relevance to recent developments in Maori art.

The actual idea of positioning taonga alongside contemporary Maori art is not new. Since the 1950s, pioneers of new approaches to Maori art have been consistently associating their work with their Maori heritage. Paratene Matchitt and John Ford, for example, displayed their work alongside carvings in a two-man show in the basement of a Hamilton department store in the 1960s. Many

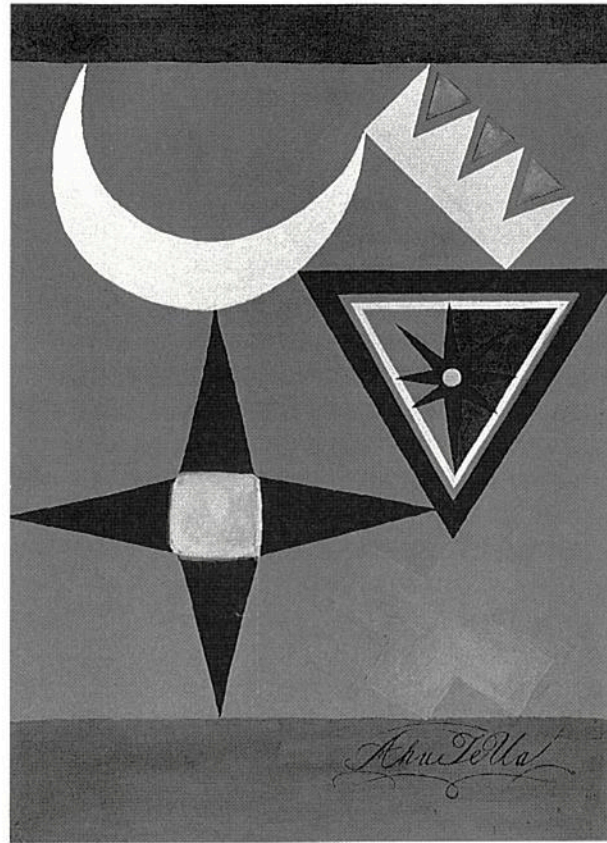
Top: Fred Graham: Ohorere 1985, nephrite (greenstone) and kauri. (Collection: National Art Gallery, Wellington).  
Centre: Hei tiki, neck pendant carved in greenstone, Ngati Ruanui. (Collection: Wanganui Regional Museum).  
Bottom: Matt Pine: Entablature with capital 1991, stone and wood. (Collection: the artist, Palmerston North).

exhibitions of a similar nature have taken place, in some cases organised and curated by non-Maoris.

In December 1978, for instance, the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts in Wellington mounted an exhibition of Maori artefacts from the National Museum in association with a series of nine banners by the leading New Zealand painter Ralph Hotere. A key issue raised by this show and its detailed survey (designed by ethnologist Roger Neich) was the lack of public understanding over the relationship between traditional and contemporary pieces. Clearly an audience needs to be more directly informed about aesthetic and thematic connections, and also discrepancies, in style, subject, technique and materials. The direct and indirect relationship between taonga such as weaving, painting, carving, stone fashioning, whakapapa (genealogy, tribal traditions, history, language) and Maori art today needs to be more carefully examined.

For example, the visual links between the Ngati Whatua Poupou with its serpentine figures (cat. no. 5) and the same tribal style used in Kura Rewiri's painting *Te Ripeka – Crucifixion* 1985 (cat. no. 14), are very direct. The writhing serpentine figures found in Rewiri's work (and Manos Nathan's *Oko Whakairo*, cat. no. 21) not only relates to a style of carving common to her Tai Tokerau (Northland) tribal area but also suits the pain and anguish of her subject – the crucifixion of Maori culture by Christianity.

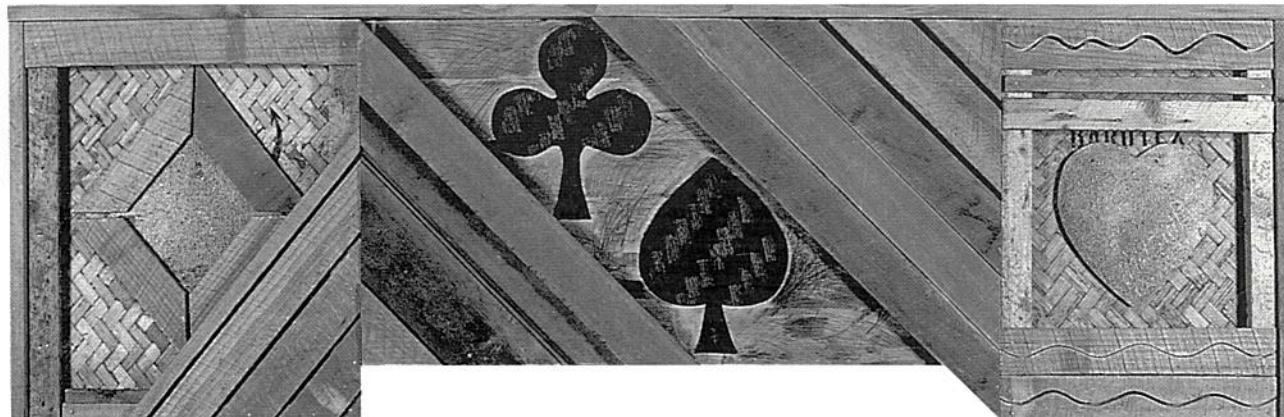
However, only general qualities in the stone artefacts exhibited are being referred to in Matt Pine's sculpture *Entablature with Capital*, 1991 (cat. no. 31) and Fred Graham's *Ohorere*, 1985 (cat. no. 25). There are the same concerns for balance of rough and smooth, plain and textured surfaces, open space and detail, and an underlying



link between the craftsman and his/her deep involvement in Maori culture. While Graham's work utilises pounamu (nephrite), a material traditionally used in Maori taonga, Pine's sculpture involves the softer Oamaru stone not favoured by our tupuna as a suitable carving material. *Entablature...* is an interesting combination of the type of facial form found in hei tiki (nephrite neck ornament) and te toi whakairo and the Grecian Ionic capital form.

Above: *Ahu Te Ua*: Treaty Painting 1990, gouache on paper. (Collection: The artist, Auckland).

Below: *Para Matchitt*: Kia Rua, kia whiri whiri a Taou – Homage to Rua 1985, wooden assemblage. (Collection: The Bath House, Rotorua).



Both Pine and Graham's sculptures also clearly illustrate the availability of new tools and techniques to the contemporary Maori artist. The more widespread use of stone, and electrical tools by Maori artists to shape it, can be traced back to the first major Maori sculptural symposium (a five-day event at the Dowse Art Museum, Lower Hutt, in 1984). This hui gave Maori artists an opportunity to work together with a large supply of Nelson steatite to explore Maori concepts and utilize the new tools available. Artists involved spoke of the mana of stone and the mauri or life force inherent in it and made reference to its mythological origins in their work. Cliff Whiting mentioned the need to revive Maori spirituality in stonecarving which he feels was "stamped out with the influence of the Christian religion".<sup>3</sup>

While these artists are making linkages back to Maori traditions and philosophy, the differences are inevitably there as well. The aesthetic boundaries of contemporary Maori work have noticeably widened. The electric saw, angle grinders, buffers, steel chisels, sanders and drills now used in working with stone have taken away the intensive labour required to work Maori taonga in nephrite. The Hei Tiki (cat. no. 7), which belonged to a Ngati Ruanui chief, Kereopa, could, for example, have taken years to work and shape with stone abrasives and tools (i.e. drills) by hand. There are signs of long-term wear, with centuries of human touching and fondling of the ornament resulting in its present glossy patina and completely worn sections of surface decoration. It has a personal history. Pine's and Graham's work, by comparison, would have taken a matter of hours to complete with the use of power tools. In some respects such Maori art today can never hope to acquire the mana of old taonga because it takes time and generations of human association to gain such prestige.

The context of taonga has also changed. Kereopa's Hei Tiki was designed to be worn. Frank Denton's *Thoughts of Days Gone By* (cat. no. 40) illustrates this functional aspect of the nephrite ornament. Other work in stone is similarly pragmatic. The Mere Pounamu (nephrite hand weapon) 'Te Kapua Tawhitinui' was designed to be used in hand to hand combat where survival, personal and tribal mana could be at stake. *Ohorere* and *Entablature...* were made to be exhibited in the context of galleries and museums. These objects were created with an awareness of the controlled environment in which they might be

shown where the viewer can be excluded from touching. However, while the context for contemporary Maori art can often be very different, the concepts which both Graham and Pine are working with are the same ones which concerned our tupuna – whanau (family), whakapapa (genealogy/identity), whenua (land), aroha (love), rangimarie (peace), whakatauki (proverbial wisdom), wehi (awe) and wana (authority).

The sculpture *Ohorere* is one of a whole series of works which Graham has produced using birds, groups of birds to talk about the importance of whanau – the family unit. Matt Pine's *Trap series* drawings (cat. nos. 32 and 33) are part of a body of work he produced about the different ways in which Maori and Pakeha have managed the Whanganui River's resources. There is the open-ended hinaki trap (used to catch eel – a Maori food resource) form and the solid dam (used for hydro-electricity at the rivers headwaters). Pine pays homage to the tapu (sacred) status of the river and the way Maori people seek to work with it rather than control and redirect it as Pakeha authorities have sought to do. The hydro-electricity dam, for example, completely blocks the river near its source, syphons its strength and takes much of its resources away from Te Atihaunui a Paparangi, the people who have depended on the river for physical and spiritual sustenance for centuries.

'Rodin once said "An art that has life does not restore works of the past, it continues them". If Maori art is to live we must take heed of these words.' – Fred Graham.<sup>4</sup> Many of the other contemporary works in this show are part of this whole process of extending the meaning and relevance of traditional forms in a contemporary idiom.

Selwyn Murupaenga's lithograph *Tuupuna o te Whenua* (ancestors of the land), 1990 (cat. no. 20) is one of many contemporary Maori images extending the meaning of figurative shapes from Maori woodcarving. For Murupaenga these forms, like those in the whare whakairo (Maori meeting house), are ancestral and therefore relate to the land which tupuna have lived and died on. The artist has used the same title in a number of earlier works – it is a recurring theme with which Murupaenga reminds his viewer that our tupuna are continually with us. They are like guardian figures and a pervading spiritual presence over the land.

The artist's sculpture *Te Maaorii*, 1988 (see cat. no. 56) is another powerful extension of the ancestor figure found in Maori carving. This work is a good example of the way contemporary Maori artists are using their work to get across issues of Maori concern. Murupaenga reveres the Spanish artist Picasso's work and his adage that the function of an artist is to sensitise the feelings of the masses. The subject matter (like that in the work of other Maori artists, particularly Emily Karaka) is controversial. Murupaenga satirises the conservative content of the celebrated 1984 exhibition of taonga *Te Maori*. The references to woodcarving are clearly stated. There is the same robust sense of humour about the body and bodily functions. The artist uses demolition timber and found metal objects. An 'S' bend copper pipe on top of the figure's head is used to suggest a tikitiki – top knot (a classical form of Maori hairstyle in vogue in the eighteenth century). Cast iron engine parts and a metal rod allude to sexual organs. The reference to Mobil in the genital area of the ancestor figure is a dig at the oil company's sponsorship of the exhibition and their involvement with the synthetic petrol plant at Motunui. While seen to be supporting Maori culture, Mobil was also backing an industry busy pumping effluent onto traditional Te Atiawa seafood beds.

As with Matt Pine's *Trap series*, Murupaenga's sculpture is a powerful way of articulating these Maori concerns about the environment. The main material used – kauri timber from local demolition sites – is one of the major timbers used in traditional Maori carving. This wood is also in increasingly scarce supply due to the exploitation and destruction by Pakeha of much of this country's native forest in the last 150 years. However, Murupaenga's real motivation for using non-traditional assemblage methods and materials is to provoke and challenge the conservative approach of the *Te Maori* exhibition and its exclusion of the Taiapa school (contemporary Maori artists) and the work of women artists. In his own eclectic and innovative sculpture Murupaenga encourages his viewer to look beyond the orthodoxy of *Te Maori* to those areas of Maori art more receptive to the Western aesthetic. Sculpture in the hands of contemporary Maori artists (like traditional Maori carving) continues to be a useful

*Pou tokomanawa depicting Hori Kingi Te Anaua. Photograph courtesy Wanganui Regional Museum.*



medium for carrying messages and expressing the feelings of Maoridom.

Ancestral figures are also important in Robyn Kahukiwa's work. Her painting *He Toa Takitahi*, 1985 (cat. no. 36) is one of many featuring figures derived from Ngati Porou carving. The artist has developed a figure type from a study of ancestral forms in the meeting house named Te Hono Ki Rarotonga at Tokomaru Bay. Such East Coast references in Kahukiwa's painting provide an interesting comparison with a Whanganui Pou Tokomanawa, included in the show by means of a photograph (cat. no. 55). Representing paramount Te Atihaunui a Paparangi chief Hori Kingi Te Anaua, the ancestral support base is actually the work of a carver from the Gisborne area. The style used shows direct visual and historical links with the Ngati Porou carving type Kahukiwa utilises. The facial type, treatment of topknot and stance are all closely related to Kahukiwa's ancestral figures.

Other women artists, like Emily Karaka and Kura Rewiri, have also made frequent use of ancestral figures, carving shapes and motifs in their work. Emily Karaka's painting *Tangata Kore*, 1984 (cat. no. 39), for example, features a tekoteko (gable post figure) shape, a decapitated form representing for the artist the "limbless, faceless, landless political position of Maori people." While artists like Whiting and Matchitt developed the use of carving forms in painting and drawing in the 1950s, the whole area of women working with the carving aesthetic (traditionally a male activity in many tribal areas) is a relatively new one being explored. Robyn Kahukiwa says:

"Art has to change to develop. If it is left the way it is it will die. There's still a place for traditional art in the meeting house, for example, but to say things about being Maori now I've got to use today's medium".<sup>5</sup>

Sometimes it's not the style or technique of a carving but its visual impression which can motivate Maori artists to explore new ideas in their work. For example, light seen through the latticework pattern in tauihu and taurapa (canoe prow and stern) has inspired the design of a number of Buck Nin's paintings. The artist uses this visual effect to explore a Maori perception of the New Zealand landscape. Nin explains:

*Selwyn Murupaenga: Te Maaorii. Photograph courtesy of Auckland City Art Gallery.*





Taking up most of the picture space, the delicately drawn taonga seem about to fan out and rest across the land. The kaitaka, like Nin's prow, takes on the political symbolism of the Treaty of Waitangi with its promise that Maori people would retain sovereignty over their land. The cloak then, about to cover Maori land, becomes a metaphor for repossession.

In contrast to Ford's use of the cloak, the triangular taniko-like patterns in Darcy Nicholas' paintings are used to "symbolise the various tribes and the connection of hapus to the person that is wearing the cloak".<sup>10</sup> Buck Nin has also recently been studying taniko cloaks and seems more interested in the aesthetics of kaitaka rather than their symbolism. Nin says it is "the fall of light and the curvature of patterns treated by folds in the cloak"<sup>11</sup> that, inspires him. Such variety of response to the common area of weaving typifies a whole diversity of approach within contemporary Maori art in general. Fred Graham sums up the refreshing nature of this variability: "The difference in all our work is so enjoyable . . . I need something different. I'd hate to think everyone had work like me".<sup>12</sup>

This diversity is also constantly being enriched by Pakeha responses to Maori art and culture. Emily Karaka, for example, considers Tony Fomison and the celebrated New Zealand painter Colin McCahon important influences on the development of her work. Fomison in turn, like McCahon, found identity and inspiration in things Maori. Theo Schoon and Gordon Walters are other artists who have made important responses to Maori art with their development of the koru module. Their work has been included in recognition of their contributions to Maori art advances.

The Fomison lithograph *The Bush you can't push it Down*, 1985 (cat. no. 41) is typical of the rich contributions being made by Pakeha artists. This work has been juxtaposed with the important early godstick from Waverley (cat. no. 8) because of Fomison's repeated use of similar proto-Polynesian forms in his painting and prints. Fomison's own admiration for Maori culture illustrates the point that dialogue is ongoing and multi-stranded as Maori artists in turn respond to such Pakeha artists' readings of Maori taonga, material culture and history.

Rangihiroa Panoho

FOOTNOTES:

1. Ngata quoted in Eric Schwimmer, *The World of the Maori*, Wellington, 1970, p150.
2. Ford quoted in introduction to Katarina Mataira's book *Maori Artists of the South Pacific*, Raglan, 1984.
3. Cliff Whiting, *New Zealand Listener*, 18 August 1984.
4. Fred Graham, *Nga Puna Waihangā* exhibition catalogue, Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui, 1985.
5. Robyn Kahukiwa, *Pacific Way*, October 1988.
6. Buck Nin quoted in Katarina Mataira's book *Maori Artists of the South Pacific*, p52.
7. Para Matchitt, *Waikato Times*, 10/5/86.
8. Interview, Panoho/Digger Te Kanawa, Ohaki Art Centre, Waitomo, 21/1/89.
9. Toi Maihi quoted in Elva Bett's, *New Zealand Art - A Modern Perspective*, Auckland, 1986.
10. Interview Panoho/Nicholas, Wellington 2/2/89.
11. Interview Panoho/Nin, Temple View, Hamilton 20/1/89.
12. Interview Panoho/Graham, Waiuku, Auckland, 19/1/89.

At left: Ralph Hotere: *Untitled 1981*, mixed media on South African flag. (Collection: Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth).

## Glossary

Maori terms used in the text without immediate translation

**AOTEAROA** New Zealand

**HAPU** section of a tribe, clan, secondary tribe

**HUI** gathering, conference

**KAITAKA** cloak with a plain body and patterned borders

**KAURI** *Agathis australis*, a forest tree

**KORU** folded, coiled, looped

**MANA** authority, prestige, control, power

**PAKEHA** European

**PARAWAI** see **KAITAKA**

**POUNAMU** New Zealand nephrite, called greenstone

**POUPOU** upright slab from the wall of a meeting house

**POU TOKOMANAWA** the post supporting the middle portion of the ridge-pole of a meeting house

**TANIKO** ornamental border of a cloak

**TAONGA** treasure or anything highly-prized. In this catalogue, used to differentiate between traditional objects from the past and contemporary artworks

**TOI WHAKAIRO** the art and knowledge of carved decoration

**TUPUNA** ancestor/s

**WHAKAPAPA** genealogy

**WHANGANUI** the river and its hinterland, now mostly National park

**WANGANUI** the city at the river estuary

### Iwi (tribes) mentioned

Ngati Whatua

Ngati Whanaunga

Tuhoe

Ngati Porou

Te Ati Awa

Taranaki

Nga Rauru

Te Ati Haunui a Paparangi

Ngati Kahungunu

NORTH ISLAND

## Exhibition Checklist

### TAONGA (traditional treasures from the past)

- HINAKI**  
woven eel net, from Pipiriki on the Whanganui River  
Te Ati Haunui a Paparangi  
600 x 300 x 315mm  
Collection: Wanganui Regional Museum
- POU MUA**  
figure carved in wood, from Hiruharama on the Whanganui River  
Te Ati Haunui a Paparangi  
1590 x 360 x 250mm  
Collection: Wanganui Regional Museum
- POU TOKOMANAWA**  
figure carved in wood, source not known possibly Te Ati Haunui a Paparangi  
1075 x 234 x 240mm  
Collection: Wanganui Regional Museum
- PARE**  
lintel carved in wood, excavated at Hauraki, known as the Newman Lintel  
attributed to Ngati Whanaunga  
340 x 1060 x 175mm  
Collection: Wanganui Regional Museum, John Barnicoat Wall Memorial Collection
- POUPOU**  
panel carved in wood  
Ngati Whatua  
1340 x 252 x 80mm  
Collection: Wanganui Regional Museum, John Barnicoat Wall Memorial Collection
- KUWAHA**  
doorway carved in wood, from Tawhitinui on the Whanganui River  
Te Ati Haunui a Paparangi  
2500 x 1210 x 75mm  
Collection: Wanganui Regional Museum
- HEI TIKI**  
neck pendant carved in greenstone  
Ngati Ruanui  
144 x 89 x 14mm  
Collection: Wanganui Regional Museum
- WHAKAPAKOKO ATUA**  
godstick carved in wood, found at Waverley  
Te Ati Haunui a Paparangi  
301 x 91 x 38mm  
Collection: Wanganui Regional Museum
- WHAKAPAKOKO ATUA**  
godstick carved in wood  
Te Ati Haunui a Paparangi  
329 x 31 x 39mm  
Collection: Wanganui Regional Museum

- MERE POUNAMU**  
hand weapon carved in greenstone, named *Te Kapua* or *Te Kapua Tawhitinui*  
Te Ati Haunui a Paparangi  
378 x 106 x 18mm  
Collection: Wanganui Regional Museum
- PARAWAI (Kaitaka)**  
cloak with a plain body and patterned border, made with dressed flax and wool  
tribal area not known  
1490 x 2110mm  
Collection: Taranaki Museum, New Plymouth
- KOROWAI with taniko border**  
cloak woven from dressed flax and wool with hukahuka (tightly twisted thrums or tags)  
tribal area not known  
1170 x 1590mm  
Collection: Taranaki Museum, New Plymouth

### CONTEMPORARY ARTWORKS AND SOME EARLIER PHOTOGRAPHS

- PHOTOGRAPHER NOT KNOWN**  
*Interior, Poutama Meeting House* 1967  
black and white photograph  
348 x 232mm  
Collection: Wanganui Regional Museum
- KURA TE WARU REWIRI** b. 1950  
*Te Ripeka-Crucifixion* 1985  
acrylic on board  
1193 x 905mm  
Collection: Waikato Museum of Art and History, Hamilton
- BOB JAHNKE** b. 1951  
*Te Ata o nga Poropiti* 1989  
mixed media assemblage, wood with lead inlays  
892 x 1982 x 110mm  
Collection: Waikato Museum of Art and History, Hamilton
- RALPH HOTERE** b. 1931  
*Acre of Wounds* 1974  
screenprint and letterpress on paper  
625 x 435mm  
Collection: Manawatu Art Gallery, Palmerston North
- AHU TE UA** b. 1962  
*Treaty Painting* 1990  
gouache on paper  
815mm x 610mm  
Collection: the artist, Auckland
- LAURENCE ABERHART** b. 1949  
*Hau Hau Flag #1, Wellington* 1983 (Courtesy of National Museum)  
black and white photograph  
106 x 241mm  
Collection: the artist, Russell

19. **LAURENCE ABERHART** b. 1949  
*Hau Hau Flag, Nelson 1983* (Courtesy Nelson College for Boys)  
black and white photograph  
140 x 240mm  
Collection: the artist, Russell
20. **SELWYN MURUPAENGA** b. 1940  
*Tuupuna o te Whenua: From the portfolio New Zealand 1990*  
lithograph  
567 x 760mm  
Collection: National Art Gallery, Wellington
21. **MANOS NATHAN** b. 1948  
*Oko Whakairo 1990*  
earthenware, bisqued, pit fired in dung and sawdust  
225 x 223 x 223mm  
Collection: National Art Gallery, Wellington
22. **RALPH HOTERE** b. 1931  
*Les Saintes Maries de la Mer 1986*  
lithograph  
515 x 420mm  
Collection: National Art Gallery, Wellington
23. **THEO SCHOON** 1915 – 1984  
*Gourd* c. 1950  
black and white photograph  
200 x 226mm  
Collection: National Art Gallery, Wellington
24. **HARIATA MEI ROPATA-TANGAHOE** b. 1952  
*Home, Heart and Soul Series I 1984*  
oil on canvas  
444 x 775mm  
Collection: National Art Gallery, Wellington
25. **FRED GRAHAM** b. 1928  
*Ohorere 1985*  
nephrite (greenstone) and kauri  
195 x 220 x 300mm  
Collection: National Art Gallery, Wellington
26. **MICHAEL PAREKOWHAI** b. 1968  
*Ataarangi 1991*  
Lacquer on wood  
1600 x 1000 x 100mm  
Collection: the artist, Auckland
27. **EMILY KARAKA** b. 1952  
*Karaka Tree at Waitangi 1989*  
oil on hessian on hardboard  
1810 x 2430mm  
Collection: Te Warena Taua
28. **MICHAEL SHEPHERD** b. 1950  
*Still Life for the Year of the Comet 1986*  
oil on board  
850 x 1650mm  
Collection: Private, Auckland
29. **ALFRED BURTON** 1834 – 1914  
*Hiruharama, Wanganui River, May 9 – 11, 1885*  
black and white photograph (copy from original negative, courtesy National Museum)  
300 x 400mm  
Collection: Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui
30. **GEORGE BOURNE** 1875 – 1924  
*Hiona, Rua's Courthouse and Meeting House, 1908*  
black and white photograph (copy from original negative, courtesy Auckland Institute and Museum)  
300 x 400mm  
Collection: Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui
31. **MATT PINE** b. 1941  
*Entablature with capital 1991*  
stone and wood  
270 x 764 x 684mm  
Collection: the artist, Palmerston North
32. **MATT PINE** b. 1941  
*Trap series drawing 1982*  
graphite on paper  
750 x 1078mm  
Collection: the artist, Palmerston North
33. **MATT PINE** b. 1941  
*Trap series drawing 1982*  
graphite on paper  
750 x 1078mm  
Collection: the artist, Palmerston North
34. **JOHN FORD** b. 1930  
*Ko Tararua 10 1991*  
pigmented inks on paper  
855 x 1040mm  
Collection: the artist, Ashhurst
35. **JOHN FORD** b. 1930  
*He Kahu 33 1991*  
pigmented inks on paper  
770 x 570mm  
Collection: the artist, Ashhurst
36. **ROBYN KAHUKIWA** b. 1940  
*He Toa Takitahi 1985*  
alkyd oil on canvas  
2055 x 1352mm  
Collection: Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui
37. **FRED GRAHAM** b. 1928  
*Carol O' Biso, Kaitiaki o Te Maori 1989*  
kauri, carved gourd, paua  
850 x 380 x 395mm  
Collection: Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui
38. **PARATENE MATCHITT** b. 1933  
*Huakina 1989*  
screenprint on paper  
765 x 480mm  
Collection: Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui
39. **EMILY KARAKA** b. 1952  
*Tangata Kore 1984*  
oil on hessian  
1588 x 894mm  
Collection: Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui
40. **FRANK DENTON** 1869 – 1963  
*Thoughts of Days Gone By 1926*  
sepia-toned photograph  
287 x 201mm  
Collection: Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui
41. **TONY FOMISON** 1939 – 1990  
*The Bush you can't push it Down 1985*  
lithograph 3/16  
467 x 330mm  
Collection: Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui
42. **RALPH HOTERE** b. 1931  
*Untitled 1981*  
mixed media on South African flag  
2800 x 1500mm  
Collection: Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth
43. **PARATENE MATCHITT** b. 1933  
*Kia Rua, kia whiri whiri a Taou – Homage to Rua, 1985*  
wooden assemblage  
690 x 2110 x 100mm  
Collection: The Bath House, Rotorua
44. **THEO SCHOON** 1915 – 1984  
*Untitled* c. 1950s  
carved gourd  
257 x 250 x 235mm  
Collection: The Bath House, Rotorua
45. **KURA TE WARU REWIRI** b. 1950  
*Whakapapa 1989*  
lithograph  
100 x 850mm  
Collection: National Art Gallery, Wellington
46. **ALFRED ARCHIBALD WILLIS** 1871 – 1948  
*(attributed)*  
*Some Maori exhibits, Wanganui Public Museum, 1899*  
black and white photograph (from original negative, courtesy National Museum)  
300 x 400mm  
Collection: Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui
47. **JAMES McDONALD** 1866 – 1935  
*(attributed)*  
*Making eel traps-hinaki, Wanganui River*  
black and white photograph (from original negative, courtesy National Museum)  
300 x 400mm  
Collection: Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui
48. **PHOTOGRAPHER NOT KNOWN**  
*Kowhaiwhai panels, Manutuke Church, Poverty Bay*  
black and white photograph (from original negative, courtesy National Museum)  
300 x 400mm  
Collection: Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui
49. **FIONA CLARK** b. 1954  
*Mana te Noki Karena 1982*  
cibachrome photograph  
282 x 282mm  
Collection: Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui
50. **FIONA CLARK** b. 1954  
*Netta Wharehoka 1982*  
cibachrome photograph  
282 x 282mm  
Collection: Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui
51. **CLIFF WHITING** b. 1936  
*Matakite 1986*  
Wood  
1468 x 370 x 610mm  
Collection: Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui
52. **GORDON WALTERS** b. 1919  
*Arahura 1982*  
screenprint  
504 x 404mm  
Collection: Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui
53. **LAURENCE ABERHART** b. 1949  
*Interior 1 and 2, Kawarau, Waitotara 1986*  
black and white photograph  
196 x 246mm each  
Collection: Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui
54. **SANDY ADSETT** b. 1939  
*Te Whare Toa 1989*  
acrylic on hardboard  
1380 x 1202 x 50mm  
Collection: John and Dawn Scott, Wanganui
55. **POU TOKOMANAWA DEPICTING HORI KINGI TE ANAUA**  
black and white photograph of a taonga held by the Wanganui Regional Museum  
400 x 300mm  
Collection: Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui
56. **SELWYN MURUPAENGA** b. 1940  
*Te Maaoriii*  
Cibachrome photograph of a sculpture in the collection of the artist  
400 x 300mm  
Collection: Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui
57. **DIGGERESS TE KANAWA** b. 1920  
*Korowai*  
Cibachrome photograph of a cloak held by the National Art Gallery and Museum, Wellington  
300 x 400mm  
Collection: Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui

## Notes on the artists

**LAURENCE ABERHART** *b. 1949.* As a photographer Laurence Aberhart is known for using a large format 8" x 10" view camera and for his work in series. Generally these consist of sites of commemoration and of structures related to ritual, this work beginning with Masonic lodges and war memorials in the mid 1970s and continuing into the 1990s with rural churches, meeting houses and cemeteries. Adopting the practice of the ethnographic photographer, Aberhart reiterates the classic museum project, that of recontextualising the artefacts of other cultures to reinforce the meanings of one's own.

**SANDY ADSETT** (*Ngati Kahungunu*) *b. 1939.* Sandy has spent most of his life on the East Coast of the North Island where he has been involved in art education. His intricate, finely crafted and strongly coloured paintings draw on kowhaiwhai and particularly koru forms. More recently his work explored issues relative to our bicultural history. He currently lives in Gisborne.

**GEORGE BOURNE 1875 – 1924.** George Bourne worked for more than 20 years as a photographer for the *Auckland Weekly News* and developed a considerable reputation with his Maori portraits. He produced an important series of photographs in the Urewaras, of which the image of Hiona, Rua's courthouse and meeting house, is one. He travelled widely, particularly to remote locations in both islands, documenting the landscape and the people.

**ALFRED BURTON 1834 – 1914.** Born in Leicester, England, Alfred joined his brother who had recently established a photography business in Dunedin in 1968. Alfred's interest was in field work and the 1880s were his most productive years, with a trip to Fiji in 1884 – his first encounter with ethnographic subjects – followed in 1885 by his Wanganui and King Country trip which produced the work that the Burton brothers' fame primarily rests on.

**FIONA CLARK** *b. 1954.* For Clark the subject's participation in the creation of the image is crucial. In some of her strongest portraits of Maori women the subject almost seems to assume control of the image-making process and the role of the artist becomes that of facilitator. Clark lives in Taranaki.

**FRANK DENTON 1869 – 1963.** A professional photographer, Denton was more than just a 'recorder'. He took many important portraits and studies of the local identities including many from the Maori settlements.

**TONY FOMISON 1939 – 1990.** Much of the political aspect in Fomison's work stemmed from his deep involvement with Maori and Pacific Island people and his awareness of the devaluation of non-European culture and experience that exists in New Zealand. His long-standing interest in and knowledge of Maori rock drawings and Oceanic art in general has contributed to his work in significant ways. Far from being simple appropriations, his figures inspired by Maori and Polynesian culture became archetypes, monumental figures that suggest not just one history but many.

**JOHN BEVAN FORD** (*Ngati Raukawa ki Kapiti, Te Ati Awa*) *b. 1930.* One of the pioneers of contemporary Maori art, he

works both as a Master Carver and artist. His pen and ink drawings explore the relationships between the landscape and the Maori culture – represented symbolically in the main by the Kahu (cloak form). The landforms that dominate his tribal landscape are primarily referenced both in his drawings and more recent sculpture. He lives at Ashhurst (near Palmerston North).

**FRED GRAHAM** (*Ngati Koroki, Kaukawa*) *b. 1928.* He explores his Maori roots through his sculptures which are informed through a meld of European sculptors and the traditions of Maori carving and kowhaiwhai. He frequently uses the bird as an allegory for the human condition – in the tradition of Maori oratory. He lives on a farmlet at Waiuku, south of Auckland.

**RALPH HOTERE** (*Ngapuhi*) *b. 1931.* His work generally can be read in an international context and has been vigorously collected by major public institutions nationally. His expressive use of line, gesture, lettering and a wide range of generally two-dimensional materials produces enigmatic work that draws very personally on a focused range of international and local issues. He spent much of his earlier life in Northland but has for the last 20 years lived in Dunedin.

**BOB JAHNKE** (*Te Whanau a Rakairoa*) *b. 1951.* His more recent work draws strongly on imagery referenced from early Maori prophets and the construction and symbolic form of East Coast meeting houses. His refined graphic design and mixed media skills are layered with an intellectual reference that interplays between cultural references and process. His constructions are generally wall mounted. He lives in Palmerston North.

**ROBYN KAHUKIWA** (*Ngati Porou*) *b. 1940.* After beginning to paint around 1965 came Kahukiwa's desire to search out her Maori identity and tribal roots. During the 1980s her painting moved from relatively illustrative of more generalised Maori mythology to a more personalised style referenced at large scale from whanau meeting houses on the East Coast. Her particular interest is in the houses named after women. She lives in Porirua.

**EMILY KARAKA** (*Ngati Whatua*) *b. 1952.* Growing up in suburban Auckland, Emily was largely disenfranchised from her tribal roots. While at Tamaki Intermediate (Auckland) she was taught by Greer Twiss and through him met Colin McCahon, who continued to support her development as an artist. Her high-keyed expressive style ideally suited the issue of the Maori struggle to regain the equality that has not been delivered through the Treaty of Waitangi partnership. Currently Emily is Artist in Residence at Tylee House in Wanganui.

**JAMES McDONALD 1866 – 1934.** James McDonald was a Tourist Department photographer at the turn of the century. In the 1920s he was associated with both the Dominion Museum and the Academy of Fine Arts. He also photographed many of Elsdon Best's expeditions and made thousands of historic photographs of Maori for the Dominion Museum.

**PARATENE MATCHITT** (*Te Whanau-a-Apanui*) *b. 1933.* Para was trained by revivalist carver Pine Taiapa, who

accepted Para's need to explore contemporary materials and means of expression. During the 1980s his sculpture has largely focussed on the symbols and flags associated with the prophets Rua Kenana and Te Kooti. He lives in Napier.

**SELWYN MURUPAENGA** (*Ngati Kuri, Te Aupouri, Te Paatu Ngati Rehia*) *b. 1940.* His work ranges from explicit and confrontational responses to the appalling historic record of New Zealand governments with regard to land rights and racial issues to witty or satirical responses to cultural issues, often using a wide range of materials and stylistic layering. He lives in Auckland.

**MANOS NATHAN** (*Ngati Whatua, Nga Puhi*) *b. 1948.* A painter, carver and potter, Nathan works from Matahina Marae, deep in the Waipoua Forest. He was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship in 1989 to make contact with North American Indian potters – particularly the Hopi Indians – and study their work. He is associated with Kaihangu-Uku, a national Maori potters' group.

**MICHAEL TE RAKATO PAREKOWHAI** (*Nga-Ariki, Te Aitanga-a-Mahaki, Rongowhakaata*) *b. 1968.* "In my work there's a sense of Maoridom, but there's also a sense of my other influences. That's what's important to me – to get them working in balance." Parekowhai is a young artist whose 'word sculptures' are open to quite contradictory readings; we have to choose whether to read them as authentic or fake, Maori or Pakeha, pure or impure, devoted or blasphemous. Parekowhai is currently living in Auckland, where he works as a school teacher.

**MATT PINE** (*Atihau, Atiawa, Tuwharetoa*) *b. 1941.* Pine has applied his objective and reductionist approach to a range of forms and elements that make up various cultures, with particular focus on the Maori traditional structures and forms – including pa fortifications, meeting houses, food stores, eel traps, canoes, weaving patterns etc. Most recently he has been producing limestone carving fragments 'lifted' from the past memories of cultures, civilisations and ages. He lives in Feilding (near Palmerston North).

**KURA REWIRI** (*Ngapuhi*) *b. 1950.* Her first solo exhibition was in Auckland in 1985, and her work during the latter part of the 1980s explored the spirituality of the land, drawing on the spiritual strength of the ancestral forms found on meeting houses – teko teko (gable post figures), godsticks etc. She currently lives in Wanganui.

**HARIATA MEI ROPATA-TANGAHOE** (*Ngati Raukawa, Te Ati Awa*) *b. 1952.* After living in Auckland for 10 years, Ropata-Tangahoe returned to her birthplace, Otaki. Her paintings are deeply personal responses to her connection with the land, whanau and Wairua Maori.

**THEO SCHOON 1915 – 1985.** A painter, photographer, printer and carver, Dutch Indonesian-born Theo Schoon saw Maori art as the only major artistic tradition available in New Zealand. Using his camera as a tool, he built up his own reference file of negatives of carvings, tattooed heads, rock drawings, rafter patterns and greenstone ornaments. From this basis he gradually evolved his own works. In terms of his own achievement, Theo Schoon's photographs of the thermal areas near Rotorua taken in the late 1960s must rank very high.

**MICHAEL SHEPHERD** *b. 1950.* There is a great debt to tradition in Michael Shepherd's work. It is significant that most of his objects are sufficiently old to be no longer of use – Maori adzes now are items of archaeology, not tools. Shepherd collects and restores Maori artefacts; half his library concerns

them. He haunts and is haunted by museums. Such an interest is central to all his work. All objects of his still-lives are items of archaeology now, or soon will be; by all of them lives may be imagined, or, as by an archaeologist, plausibly reconstructed.

**AHU TE UA** (*Ngati Porou, Te Aitanga a Mahaki*) *b. 1962.* Born and educated in Wanganui, Ahu studied graphic art at the Wellington Polytechnic during the early 1980s. He now lives in Auckland, where he works as a painter and freelance graphic designer.

**DIGGERESS TE KANAWA** (*Ngati Maniapoto*) *b. 1920.* From an early age (making her first piece of taniko at 11) Diggeress began weaving and she had as her teacher her mother, Rangimarie Hetet, Aotearoa's most celebrated living weaver. Like her mother she is a confirmed traditionalist and has played an important part in the revival of the traditions. She has in recent years researched many of the early cloaks held in museums in New Zealand and overseas, rediscovering "lost" patterns and techniques. Diggeress lives at Waitomo.

**GORDON WALTERS** *b. 1919.* With the war came an influx of European refugees. One such was Theo Schoon, whom Walters met in 1941. Through Schoon, Walters gained new artistic insights that included Surrealism and a period of experimentation with a range of styles in the 1940s. In 1947 Walters became strongly influenced by Maori rock art and in particular the rock artists' economy of means. What he admired in Polynesian and Maori art enabled him to achieve a degree of assimilation. Perfecting the 'koru' that was to become Walters' personal signature theme took many years. The interplay of positive and negative is unequivocal and, unlike Maori 'koru' patterns, identical in shape so that our perception of their relationship is immediate and insistent.

**CLIFF WHITING** (*Whanau-a-Apanui*) *b. 1936.* Cliff has become involved with the development and restoration of marae, which frequently takes precedence over his personal work. He has developed a fluent carving and painting style that enables him to visually interpret from his increasing knowledge of stories of the Maori. With Para Matchitt, Cliff is one of the most important figures in contemporary Maori art. He lives in Russell, in the Bay of Islands.

**ALFRED ARCHIBALD WILLIS 1871-1948.** Willis was a Wanganui-based professional photographer from 1899 to around 1905.