



Te Whare Wānanga
o Awanuiārangi

Wānanga Rau Taumata Rau Pūkenga Rau

2025



Explanation of title

“Awanuiārangi wānanga rau” is a line from a pepeha by Hamiora Pio (Ngāti Awa, Mātaatua). It refers to both the many predecessors of tohunga before Awanuiārangi, symbolising succession, and means “Awanuiārangi supreme scholar.” The phrase also denotes scholarship (wānanga) and multitudes (rau), highlighting both learning and legacy.

Editors

Patricia Johnston-Ak

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Ngā waha kākā tarahae,
ngā pikinga kōtuku kua whati,
te hunga e tawēwē ana i te takiwā
koinei te kupu whakamau i a koutou.
Tēnā koutou ngā kaituhi e manako nei
ki te tāwhai ki roto i te ao mātauranga.
Mauria mai te whakaaro e putaputa maharatanga
ana
o te tūmanako kia noho tahi ai tāua
ki te hanga kupu kia rongona tōna reo.
Mā te rangahau i ngā kupu
ka whiwhi reo ngā wawatae manakohia ana.
Kia tikapohia e te hau kia rongona e te taringa
areare
hai whakatipu whakaaro.
Mā tō kupu, me tāku ka rere te reo, hai kupu kawē
kōrero
Rukuhia te mātauranga ki tōna hōhonutanga,
takahia te ara hai
whāwhā i tōna whānuitanga.
Nau mai haere mai ki Te Whare Wānanga o
Awanuiārangi.

The multitudes of voices that have fallen
silent; the yearning for those who reside
within the soul; these are a mere few words
to acknowledge the enormity of your loss. To
the authors we acknowledge your aspiration
to take that step, into the world of academia.
Bring with you that elusive faceless idea yet
to reveal itself that drives your passion, in the
hope together we can begin to form words to
voice your aims and ambitions.

By collectively selecting terms, words of your
aspirations appear, carried by the winds to
discerning ears raising a consciousness that
thoughts may grow. The collective selection
of each of our 'words' create the ultimate
voice that will tell your story.

Pursue knowledge to its ultimate depths; let
your mind imagine the breadth of its width.

Nā Wiremu Doherty (2012)

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Foreward



Wiremu Doherty

CEO Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi

Ko Tarapounamu me Pūtauaki ngā maunga,

Ko Okahu, me Ōhinemataroa ngā awa,

Ko Te Wharekotua me Te Hurinui-Apanui ngā tāngata

Ko Tūhoe me Ngāti Awa ngā Iwi,

Ko Ngāti Tāwhaki me Ngāti Hōkōpū ngā hapū

This monograph is a collection of works drawn from te ao Māori, illustrating various forms of performance and the messages captured within. Creating these works necessitates a profound understanding of the culture and its application across a range of contexts. The language contains key indicators that provide insight, helping to define the use and application of the cultural practices embodied in the performances. Thus, not only in-depth knowledge of the culture is required, but also of the language. When these three components- knowledge, language, and culture align, the intent of the practice is revealed. Through the depth and clarity afforded by the synergy of these components, the answers to the 'why' and the 'how' of practice are uncovered.

In recent years, various forms of composition have been employed to capture the mood and themes of contestation. Political messages and points are recurring themes in many compositions, drawing on examples

from previous generations, who similarly utilised this medium to express the points of contestation of their era. Examples of Māori performing arts beautifully capture the language, knowledge, and culture. When these three critical elements are present, notions of authenticity and the content's veracity are addressed. By bringing these components together, the language reveals the knowledge, which in turn highlights not only the accuracy of the language but also the cultural aspects presented through this knowledge to ensure authenticity. As noted previously, when this trio works in unison, the intent behind the cultural practices is illuminated, answering the 'why' question often posed by those seeking to understand cultural practices.

There is an intriguing observation suggesting that if learning is reduced to merely theoretical exercises of reading and writing, it contributes to an increase in conditions like Alzheimer's and variants of Parkinson's disease. While the powerful presence of knowledge, language, and culture is critical in ensuring the accuracy of composition, they also assist in guiding practical physical performance, where cultural rules influence the movement and positioning of various body parts, evident through the amalgamation of knowledge, language, and culture. The combining of theoretical learning exercises with physical movement draws its origins from the cosmological accounts of Māori, embedded in knowledge, described through language, and practised through cultural traditions, visible through waiata-ā-ringā, haka, and mōteatea.

In addition to merging the theoretical with the practical, this method powerfully illustrates the individual contribution to the collective. As members of the group, individuals are responsible for mastering their movements, paying particular attention to ensure that the appropriate actions



align and converge on the right word. Having learned it as an individual, the next challenge is to ensure the timing of singing the words and aligning the actions to achieve perfect unity with the other members of the kapa. When learning the timings and the correct moments to punctuate the actions, the power of peripheral vision helps follow the actions to the right and left and those in front of you.

From a teaching and learning perspective, pedagogically, reinforcing what is taught through physical activity and within a group setting is a powerful illustration of how long, complex and intricate actions and songs can be mastered. Identifying individual tasks for mastery alongside the collective performance and strategically positioning skilled individuals throughout the group to reinforce and guide those needing support reassures learners that assistance is available if they require a refresher on subsequent actions or words: by discreetly placing top performers within the group to serve as role models, those still striving to master the requirements can receive guidance without drawing attention to their level of mastery. Furthermore, having experts perform alongside them assures those needing help that support is present. In time, they too will consistently reach the level of mastery demonstrated by the top performers. Unfortunately, this method of learning contrasts sharply with what we still witness in compulsory education, where students must decode or hunt for answers to questions that many learners are not cognitively aware of.

Finally, through the performing arts, notions of a person's identity are reinforced, maintained, and tested. As Indigenous peoples, we remember: the accounts from the past are essential, as they are described as the days that hang in front, *i ngā rā ō mua*, to inform decisions made for today and tomorrow, defined as the days yet to ascend, *i ngā rā e heke mai nei*. Placing the past in front and observing and analysing our historical actions through language sharply focuses on the individual's cultural and linguistic identity. Through the medium of Māori performing arts, an individual's cultural and linguistic identity is revealed for those seeking to reconnect and is reinforced for those needing affirmation. This clarity enables individuals to locate and position their views on emerging matters, maintaining clarity about what they stand for, along with their desires and aspirations.



Introduction

This monograph celebrates kapa haka. The main contributors are experts in their fields, recognised in terms of leadership, tutorship, performance and composition – some in the early years of their lives (and some not). All carry with them a wealth of dedication and expertise. Taking the opportunity to highlight our kapa haka programme, this manuscript speaks to the environment of Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi, firstly with a message from our **CE Wiremu Doherty** who broadly outlines the goals, objectives and values of Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi. Secondly, this is followed by a historical introduction to the wānanga by **Patricia Johnston-Ak** that sets the framework for the philosophies, the ‘culture’ that enables programmes like kapa haka to flourish. The establishment of the Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts (BMPA), its history and rationale is next, written by two staff who have been heavily involved with that qualification: **Sheree Spooner** and **Junior Tana**. Both Sheree and Junior have experience in kapa haka through performance, tutoring and competition. We have an assortment of eclectic contributions to this manuscript. Some of the authors have leaned towards composition and discussions while others have written a positionality piece that not only draws on their experiences in kapahaka but also outlines the research they are setting out to undertake.

Positionality is an important characteristic of our research writing and thesis work. Positionality declares an author’s/researchers ‘interest’ in the research, their authority (why me) to be involved, an emphasis on community/dissemination that takes into consideration the accountability, responsibility, reciprocity, integrity and respect for all participants and their information shared: this is not left up to chance, but is integrated into our research programmes across the wānanga. All of the contributors are staff at Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi and either

hold a PhD or are enrolled into a Master’s or Doctoral programme. The themes from the positionality pieces are loosely organized around their thesis topics.

Joylene Rohe-Karauria (master’s tauira) speaks to her journey of growing up with kapa haka and a desire to see the practices and whānau involvement on the marae cultivate a new generation of performers. The centrality of the marae in those developments is the focus of her research which she calls Pā Haka.

Georgina Kerekere (doctoral candidate) presented her thoughts on mōteatea at the Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts Symposium (2024). A précis of mōteatea is discussed in her writings.

Tipene Tihema-Biddle (doctoral candidate) also writes a positionality piece outlining his journey through his master’s to doctoral candidacy. His focus on utilising kapa haka as a vehicle for marae and hapū development is the kaupapa for his thesis.

Tamara Hapi (doctoral candidate) also speaks of mōteatea, and she presents to us a maimai aroha that she composed herself.

Finally, **Tuhoe Huata** writes of his mother Ngamoni Huata. His positionality speaks of growing up and learning kapa haka. His thesis kaupapa focuses on the work of his mother and her contributions to poi and kapa haka. We would like to thank Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga for the **2024 Whakaaweawe Grant: 24 WHA 18** (Title: *Wānanga Rau, Taumata Rau, Pūkenga Rau*) to assist in the costs associated with this publication and also to our Research Office, especially Dr Cary Clark (Manager Research and Innovation) who has been ‘all over this’ with his support.

Patricia Johnston-Ak / Billie Jo Pomare Rameka
Editors

School of Undergraduate Studies Committee

Research Committee and Strategy

In April 2024 the School of Undergraduate Studies leadership (Sheree Spooner and Junior Tana) formalised the establishment of a Research Group made up of staff within the School interested in working together to build research capability. Up until that point, research was being managed from within programmes across the School of Undergraduate Studies by National Programme Coordinators however, it became apparent that a much more focused strategy was required.

Dr Billie Jo Pomare Rameka (Bachelor of Humanities National Programme Coordinator) was appointed as chair of the Research Group, and core membership includes Dr Cary Clark (Research Office), Junior Tana (then Joint Head of School), Sheree Spooner (then Joint Head of School), and Prof Patricia Johnston-Ak (newly appointed as Lead Research) for the School of Undergraduate Studies.

A research strategy approved by the Research Committee (with a three-tiered structured approach), focused on staff qualifications (tier one), outputs such as conferences and publications (tier two) and research projects (tier three).

Billie Jo Pomare Rameka



Dr Cary Clark



Junior Tana



Sheree Spooner



Prof Patricia Johnston-Ak



Māori Performing Arts Symposium

Capitalising on a planned symposium from the Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts Team for September 2024, the committee supported and assisted staff with their presentations and also produced this formalised output – Wānanga Rau, Taumata Rau, Pūkenga Rau. The Bachelor of Maori Performing Arts symposium had two main goals:

1. as a means to bring all cohorts of the programme on site to complete assessments and
2. as an opportunity for staff to speak to their work (and intended work for a Master's or PhD).

Before the symposium, several hui and workshops were run to support staff in the crafting of their presentations and also the shaping of their thesis topics. (All of these staff are either continuing or beginning postgraduate studies in 2025). The symposium was held on Friday, 13th September. Several guest speakers also presented, whom we would like to acknowledge:

Rev Dr Te Hira Paenga – *Ngā Puhi, Ngāti Porou, Ngāti Kahungunu*

Te Hira is a prolific composer, exponent, tutor, and judge of haka, mau rākau and te reo Māori. In 2023, Te Hira completed a PhD in Theology entitled *Ngā Ihoatua o te Kapahaka* through the University of Otago, becoming the first student to write and defend a Doctorate in Theology in Te Reo Māori. Te Hira presented the kaupapa of his thesis.

Kahurangi and Chey Milne

Chey – *Te Rarawa, Ngāpuhi, Ngāi Tahu*

Kahurangi – *Ngāti Rangiwewehi, Ngāti Whakaue*

Arataua is a Māori Media production company founded by Chey and Kahurangi Milne. Kahurangi and Chey are both passionate exponents of haka and have a rich history in

the artform. Kahurangi and Chey discussed the influences, skills and knowledge experienced and gained in haka and how this has been transformed into their business lives.

Kawariki Morgan – *Ngāti Hine, Waikato, Ngāti Porou, Te Whānau a Apanui*

I whakapakeke mai ia i te Kōhanga Reo, Kura Kaupapa Māori me te Wharekura o Hoani Waititi Marae, i reira mōhio ai ia ko te haka tana tino kaingākau. I maringanui a Kawariki i ngā akoranga me ngā tauwhiroanga a te hunga pēnei i a Tā Pita Sharples, Te Aroha Paenga, Ngapo rāua ko Pimia Wehi rātou ko Tā Derek Lardelli. I ēnei rā, ko Kawariki tētahi o ngā kaiako, kaitātaki, kaitito hoki o te kapa haka o Ngā Tūmanako, kua tata rua tekau tau e tū ana. Kua neke atu i te rua tekau tau hoki a Kawariki e whai ana i ngā mahi pāpāho a mohoa nei.

Kapa haka has come about through resistance and struggle. Struggle to have kapa haka recognised as a valid art performance, struggle for funding, struggle for government recognition, struggle to get to practices, struggle for te reo Māori, struggles and more struggles. However, the future is promising as we are seeing commitments to kapa haka manifested through whānau, hapū and iwi regional competitions, those amazing Matatini National Competitions, and the increase in those eager to explore kapa haka in the performing arts.

This is the first publication of what we hope will be an ongoing contribution to developments and discussions about kapa haka.

Whāia te iti kahurangi, ki te tuohu koe, me he maunga teitei.



An Introduction to Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi

Patricia Maringi G. Johnston-Ak

Ko Mauao te maunga

Ko Tauranga te moana

Ko Mātaatua te waka

Ko Ngāi te Rangī, Ngāti Ranginui ngā iwi

Ko Ngāti Tapu, Tamarāwaho ngā hapū

Background

Traditional whare wānanga existed in New Zealand prior to colonisation and were considered the highest places of learning, where the teaching of information was subjected to exceptionally rigorous and demanding processes, accessed by 'experts' and superior families and not available to all¹.

Whare wānanga were clearly places of excellence, focused on quality and insisting on only the best. Indeed the mission statement of Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi reads:

*Rukuhia te mātauranga ki tōna hōhunutanga me
tōna whānuitanga
(Pursue knowledge to its greatest depth and
broadest horizons)*

¹ Elsdon Best, The Māori School of Learning: Its Objects, Methods and Ceremonial (Dominion Museum Bulletin No.6, 1923).

Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi has qualities that make its contribution to the tertiary sector unique and necessary, unique in terms of āhuatanga Māori and necessary in terms of Māori decision-making by Māori for Māori. It offers programmes that are 'niche' targeted, which are complementary to university and polytechnic operations, while resisting the assimilation of things Māori to be 'described, labelled and categorised in a Western manner'².

The distinctive characteristics of Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi and its contributions should not be underestimated. The general perception of the Wānanga is one of being a 'Māori institution', interested in offering only 'Māori things' to a largely 'Māori audience'. However, section 162, 4(b) iv of the 1989 Education Act provides a broader definition:

A wānanga is characterised by teaching and research that maintains, advances and disseminates knowledge and develops intellectual independence, and assists the application of knowledge regarding āhuatanga Māori (Māori tradition) according to tikanga Māori (Māori custom).

Mead states that the definition of āhuatanga and tikanga Māori in the Act is not clear and is slightly restrictive as the English equivalents do not do justice to the concepts of āhuatanga and tikanga.³

² Patricia Johnston, "He Ao Rereke. Education Policy and Māori Educational Under-achievement: Mechanisms of Power and Difference" (Unpublished PhD Thesis in Education, University of Auckland, 1998).

³ Hirini Mead, Tikanga Māori (Huia Publishers, 2003), 12–13



In viewing the first section of the clause however, there are several key responsibilities that a wānanga is charged with, over and above āhuatanga and tikanga Māori, and which are often not highlighted. The key words are: 'teaching' and 'research', 'maintains', 'advances' and 'disseminates', 'knowledge', 'intellectual independence' and 'application' – the same sorts of activities one would expect from any tertiary institution – activities of quality, excellence and rigour.

Thus wānanga are also expected to perform according to national criteria (for example, research and teaching), internationally set benchmarks, and are subjected to the same forms of evaluation, monitoring and moderation as other tertiary institutions. And there the similarity with other institutions ends. Wānanga are also expected to perform to iwi criteria, iwi benchmarks and are subjected to intense iwi evaluation, monitoring and moderation – sometimes very publicly on marae – that other tertiary institutions are not. While other tertiary institutions enjoy measures of autonomy and decision-making, Awanuiārangi must always consider the desires, visions and views of those iwi whom it works with and the Māori and Indigenous communities that it serves – to build educational capability, to disseminate language and knowledge, to teach and to research. This is a unique feature of wānanga.

As a result of our mandate from the 1989 Education Act, we are charged to consider how the development of new degrees and programmes are responsive to community needs, goals and interests and it is those demands that drive what Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi produces. Our developments are different from what is offered through other tertiary institutions because of our dual national and iwi requirements and also because of our commitment to the educational, social and economic advancement of iwi Māori. We are also currently working alongside other overseas Indigenous communities to exchange ideas, build relationships, disseminate information and practices and in some cases, enable the enrolment of their students into our programmes.

Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi distinctiveness is also reflected by carrying the name 'Whare', clearly aligning it to lore of knowledge, āhuatanga, tikanga and mātauranga Māori within iwi traditions. The concept of whare for Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi extends into its marae-based programmes, with whare representing both a physical framework (marae) as well as a conceptual one. That distinctiveness is further embedded by marae and hapū knowledges so that the conceptual framework is framed by a context that is often localised only to a specific region or marae.

One distinctiveness of the Wānanga derives from its student base – mainly Māori – some of whom have been failed by the mainstream education system or who are actively seeking to attend a wānanga to do either their first (undergraduate), second (Masters) or third (PhD) degree. That Māori students are actively seeking out the Wānanga to pursue a qualification has contributed significantly to the growth of the Wānanga in the past ten years. Additionally, we are also being sought out by Indigenous students living in Aotearoa and abroad and even more recently by immigrant students.

Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi enjoys confidence on the part of Māori and enjoys strong support from a number of quarters. Iwi and hapū at the community level, for example, support the Wānanga as they see it as their own institution and are more likely to invest extra time and energy in supporting Wānanga activities like pōwhiri and mihi whakatau. 'He taura tangata e kore e momotu (a human rope cannot be severed)'. The same can be said of the student and staff population with staff expending great effort to support students. This support results in mutually beneficial expectations that many courses offered by Awanuiārangi will meet hapū and iwi learning and educational needs. As Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi moves to embrace and support the goals and visions of tribal, native and Indigenous communities internationally, we are confident that our foundation as an iwi and waka-based organisation gives us the ability to forge and continue to build networks for the benefits of Indigenous students, communities, organisations and institutions. Those interactions will further support opportunities for our students and communities to benefit from exchanges of ideas and networking, for the advancement of Indigenous research, theories and nations.

Vision

Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi is a quality provider of programmes within the tertiary education sector in Aotearoa New Zealand that reflects a distinctive Indigenous cultural component within the New Zealand context. The vision is to promote, grow and sustain all aspects of Māori language, knowledge and culture and have regard to tikanga Māori practice. Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi has developed a range of Māori educational opportunities and advancements designed to positively impact the social, economic and cultural growth of Māori communities and iwi. Working with community is an integral part of that process. For example, the Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts (the focus of this manuscript) grew from discussion within community and those who



were performing in kapa haka competitions throughout the motu. Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi is a Whare Wānanga (House of Higher Learning). The term 'Whare' in our title is distinctive within the wānanga sector and it embraces the original founding aspiration to provide high calibre educational opportunities at all levels within the tertiary sector. The breadth of our learning provision is expansive, based on need and 'wawata' (aspirations), and extends from marae and community-based learning programmes up to graduate programmes at master's and doctoral levels. These programmes focus on the theme of Māori development and advancement and benchmark to a wider body of international Indigenous research activity. Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi is also part of a wider regional Bay of Plenty, Mātaatua community, broader iwi communities and international Indigenous communities. Consequently, the Wānanga endeavours to work positively and proactively and to contribute to the collective enhancement of regional and broader interests when invited or required. We are therefore committed to improving Māori and non-Māori potential to participate in knowledge economy and knowledge society opportunities nationally and internationally.

Wānanga Conceptual Framework

The development of programmes for Māori knowledge requires the foundation, the very platform for delivery, to be immersed within the cultural elements for students to experience success – not just the what (the tangible), but also the why (the intangible). The models within programmes like the Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts draw on holistic approaches to teaching and learning that include support systems for Māori students based on cultural imperatives. These approaches can differ from year to year but incorporate several common key elements that include:

1. the normalisation of Māori cultural practices (including protocols and traditional practices), which are wrapped around a student's learning experience, and with which they identify and are included
2. the operation of tikanga (practices) and te reo (language) throughout the programmes, in classroom and assessment practices
3. the normalisation of Māori knowledge, the acknowledgment of knowledge that colonisation has disrupted and displaced; the knowledge of the elders and the knowledge of others (including Indigenous peoples and Western knowledge) and

4. the operation of embedded support systems based on cultural practices.

Diagrammatically, the framework can be represented as follows:

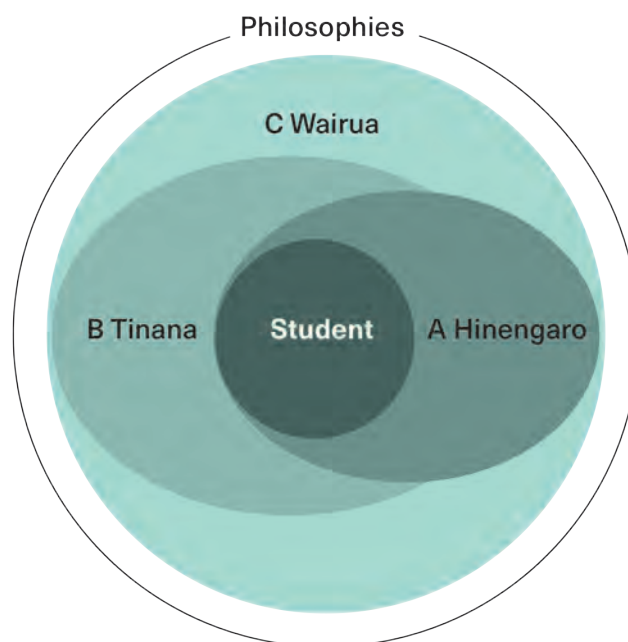


Figure 1: Integrated Approach to Teaching & Learning

Source: P. Johnston, *Programme document: Doctor of Indigenous Development and Advancement, Doctor of Māori Development and Advancement, 2012*

Hinengaro, Tinana and Wairua represent the intersections of mind (intellectual dimension), outer body (physical dimension)⁴ and inner body (spiritual dimension) which are crucial to developing and sustaining a balanced environment for students. Hinengaro is sustained by lecturers and supervisors; tinana is sustained by other students and by ringawera (literally translated as hot hands – those who prepare meals and support for the students), and wairua by kaumātua (elders). The successful balance of these three components sustains an environment conducive to learning, an environment that supports and nurtures culture, language and identity.

The outer circle represents the underlying philosophies that support the programme. These philosophies embrace Māori concepts of support and nurturing like whanaungatanga and fundamental practices of operation, but also encompass views about success, engagement, reciprocity and commitment to the task at hand and to each other. The actual learning environment is a

⁴ Rose Pere, *Te Wheke: A Celebration of Infinite Wisdom* (Ao Ako Learning, 1991), 16.



complex of buildings and ceremonial areas that Rose Pere describes as the central meeting place for the community⁵. This is the site where many of our programmes are located, in communities like marae or at Awanuiārangi where students come together for their 'noho marae', a space within the complex of Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi.

While the noho space is an ideal place for teaching and learning, at another level it gives students the opportunity to distance themselves, away from potentially hostile contexts as a means to strategise, plan and learn. It is a space that also enables students to discuss and contest knowledge and ideas in the relative safety of things Māori. Students who are not strong in their language and culture are not disadvantaged in this context, as those who have the experience move alongside to support them by either advising or showing them what to do, or through other activities like translating conversations from Māori into English.

A, B and C of the framework further include the wānanga community. This community is made up of people who share multiple roles in terms of cultural and academic spaces, for example the roles of being kaumātua, kuia, kaikaranga or tohunga, and being supervisor, lecturer or programme coordinator. The wānanga community is a diverse and multifunctional community that draws from external community relationships (aunties or uncles for example) and inter-relationships to 'wrap around' the student's extensive learning and teaching opportunities. The wānanga and community are terms which represent both tangible and intangible facets. The tangible, for example, relates to the physical representations, the 'seen' – such as homes, buildings or regions. The intangible aspect of the term wānanga is defined as a forum for discussions, dialogue and meetings. The intangible aspect of the community is defined by either genealogical links or as a community of interests. Both the physical and intangible aspects of wānanga and community operate concurrently with each other, to bring about balance.

Students can't help but grow in this environment because the noho environment enables a healing process. It gives a 'breathing-space' to re-group, to re-read, re-think and re-connect to places, people and lifeways that colonisation has disrupted. It also enables the luxury to critique, review and for some to decolonise, in the safety of a breathing space where colonisers are absent.

In this space, students are often invited to assume a position of authority and are called upon to do things like introduce visiting lecturers and also thank them. They do

so without fuss and without disagreement, with some even taking the lead to initiate these responses without being asked or indicated to do so. They will often direct the rest of the class to respond in appropriate cultural ways and lecturers become just another class member.

Students also learn about humility, to allow others the opportunity to speak and put forward their points of view, to have respect for each other's opinions, even if they don't agree with them. Given the mix of students in terms of their iwi (tribal) affiliations, hapū (sub-tribal) affiliations, religious beliefs, and so on, this is an exceptionally large undertaking because the historical actions of their iwi or hapū can place them in direct conflict or disagreement with each other. They ultimately learn to navigate those pathways with diplomacy and tact. It is also manageable as the ground rules of 'how they are to interact with each other' are clearly spelt out at the beginning of programmes.

They learn about accountability in terms of the knowledge they gain, just as they learn about reciprocity – giving and taking, a two-way process – and responsibility. Students are quite clear about why they are involved in the programme. They are exposed to ideas and made familiar with the expectation that they will complete their tohu just as they learn that their engagement with the programme means that they will use their degrees to further the needs of their own communities.

About the Author

Patricia Johnston-Ak specialises in Postgraduate Studies, Research, and Policy. Before moving to Whakatāne in 2003, she was a faculty member in Education at both Auckland and Massey Universities. At Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi, she played a pivotal role in developing the School of Indigenous Graduate studies, the graduate programmes (including the doctoral programme), advancing research for the wānanga (including for the Performance-Based Research Fund), and contributing to programme development and research.

Expanding her expertise, she now includes Indigenous Studies and Humanities in her academic portfolio. She teaches at both Bachelor and Postgraduate levels, supervises research students, and mentors undergraduate staff in their qualification and research journeys. Patricia is an active researcher, publishing nationally and internationally. She also serves on research panels and is a monitor for the New Zealand Qualifications Authority.

5 Pere, *Te Wheke*, 46.





Ngā Mana Whakairo a Toi

Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts

Sheree Spooner

*Ko Titirangi te maunga
Ko Waiau te awa
Ko Rangiahua te marae
Ko Ngāi Tamaterangi te hapū
Ko Ngāti Kahungunu ki Te Wairoa te iwi
Ko Sheree Spooner ahau*

Junior Tana

*Ko Pouerua te maunga
Ko Taumarere te awa
Ko Mātaatua te waka
Ko Ōtiria te marae
Ko Ngāti Rāhiri te hapū
Ko Ngāpuhi te iwi
Ko Junior Tana ahau*

Tauparapara mō Ngā Mana Whakairo a Toi (Opening incantation for Ngā Mana Whakairo a Toi)

Whano, whano! Ara mai te toki,
Te rautoki nā Toi, nā Rēhia, nā Tānerore.
Ko Ngā Mana Whakairo a Toi te huatahi, a Toi kai rākau,
Koia hei pou herenga tāngata, hei pou herenga kapa,
Kia toi pūkenga, kia toi wānanga, kia toi whakairo.
Haramai te haka, haramai te rēhia,
Haramai tētahi āhua,
He kura huna nō mua mai, kua tau ki te ao mārama.
Haumi e! Hui e! Tāiki e!

Advance, advance! Let the adze be readied,
The sacred ritual adze of Tiki, of Rēhia, of Tānerore.
Ngā Mana Whakairo a Toi, Toi the firstborn, Toi the
wielder of the rākau,
Stands as the anchoring post for the people and the
kapa,
Let skilled expression flourish, let knowledge flourish, let
artistry flourish.
Let haka arrive, let Rēhia rise,
Let a form emerge
A hidden treasure from ancient times, now settled in the
world of light.
Join together! Unite! Let it be done!



Introduction: The Need for a Māori Performance Degree

The beginnings of the Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts at Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi in 2010, were founded on the aspirations of Māori communities. Conversations for the degree were initiated in March 2009 due to the huge volume of tauira interest (over 200 participants) that were either currently enrolled or graduates of the level 5 Manu Korihi Certificate in Māori Mahi a Rēhia, also offered at Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi.⁶

Within the kapa haka communities there had long been a desire for a nationally recognised qualification that celebrated kapa haka, that also acknowledged the expertise, professionalism, and cultural depth inherent in Māori performing arts. This vision was about more than just recognition: it was about highlighting an artform that had too often been relegated to the periphery of performance arts and overlooked in academic spaces. Additionally, at the heart of the Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts is the recognition of competitive kapa haka, which is a primary driving force behind the evolution, revival and innovation of the artform. The pinnacle of performance is celebrated as a competition at Te Matatini, first starting in 1972 as the New Zealand Polynesian Festival, evolving into the Aotearoa Traditional Performing Arts Festival in 1996, before officially becoming Te Matatini in 2005. This event sets the national standard of excellence in kapa haka. The establishment of the Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts was also a response to the high level of scholarship, creativity, and discipline already present within Te Matatini performances which, at the time, received no formal academic acknowledgment.

Those within the sector witnessed the depth of mātauranga, the hours of composition and choreography, and the cultural, linguistic, and historical knowledge embedded within a Te Matatini campaign, equalling, if not exceeding that of many recognised academic disciplines. Yet up until 2010 no degree existed that validated this level of indigenous excellence. That, together with the interest from Māori communities, was a realisation which became a major driver in the development of the Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts.

Design of the Programme

Te Matatini was not only a philosophical influence; it was also central to the practical and strategic design of the programme. The Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts incorporated Te Matatini and regional qualification events as performance platforms for tauira to progress in their kapa haka studies. These competitions became the final performance submission opportunities for the practical components of the degree, providing a real-world, culturally rich stage upon which tauira could demonstrate their capability, artistry, and leadership.

The target audience for the Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts from the outset were the rōpū competing at Te Matatini and in the regional qualification rounds. These were the groups whose mātauranga and creative practice were already operating at degree level, and the programme was developed to meet them where they were on the ātea, on the stage, or in the whare as a means to recognise and elevate their efforts academically.

The magnitudinous scope of skills and knowledge that encompasses a team's preparation for competition includes the process of composition – from the ideas of a composer to the final stage production and subsequent performance. This process alone requires the composer to be socially, politically, and culturally attuned in ways that contribute to relevant themes and topics. Topics and themes require thorough research, whether for a new lyrical composition or exploring an existing composition that incorporates messages associated to the themes at hand. The theme and topic chosen can also be determined by the discipline of the item: an example of this is haka, which contain a strong political focus, whereas poi often explore social or cultural topics. Once the theme is chosen, the lyrical composition ensues, requiring a high level of skill and knowledge in language acquisition, language structures and constructs, as the lyrical composition has various layers to consider.

The language used in a composition must consider its theme, the style of the discipline, the incorporation of history, stories, metaphors, wordplay, and dialect, along with sentence structures often influenced by the music of the composition.

This is but one example of the many skills required in a competitive campaign. There are many other creative skills such as musical composition, choreography, uniform design, and visual design. There are also managerial and logistical skills that are required: budgeting, financing, funding applications, funding accountability, accounting, logistics with regards to training, but also travel, and

⁶ Ngā Mana Whakairo a Toi: Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts Programme Document. (Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi, 2010), 8.



scheduling. And that's not even considering the leadership skills, mental fortitude, and fitness needed for a long campaign. All of this activity is underpinned by cultural values and tikanga practices, culminating in a team's performance on a competitive stage, where you are judged by a panel, and required to adhere to a list of rules and regulations set by the competition.

Te Matatini did not just inspire the Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts programme, it shaped it. It offered a blueprint of excellence and a living example of how kaupapa Māori could lead tertiary curriculum design. Thus, the Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts curriculum is designed to encapsulate, enhance, and extend skills and knowledge associated with the aforementioned skills and knowledge required for a competitive campaign. The ongoing relationship with Te Matatini, including its support of postgraduate study through scholarships, is a testament to the enduring partnership and shared vision between the national kapa haka stage and Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiāraangi.

Conceptual Thinking: How did the Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts get started?

As noted previously, initial conversations up to 2009 were already taking place with a wide range of people: iwi leaders, practitioners, educators, and kapa haka exponents across the motu. The guiding question was, how can we best support the continuation of Māori performing arts in a way that is rigorous, forward-thinking, yet faithful to the artform.

Subsequently, the key foundation programme for the Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts – the Manu Kōrihi certificate – already created a pathway to articulate indigenous performance practice into tertiary education in a way that didn't compromise its integrity. It was this framework that the Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts built on, with contributions from Māori providers and academics from all over Aotearoa.

The kaupapa of the programme was not only shaped by the yearning of Māori communities across the nation but was also gifted a powerful name that reflects its intent and depth. Professor Wiremu Doherty (the then Academic Provost of Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiāraangi) bestowed the name Ngā Mana Whakairo a Toi to the programme, signifying the artistry, authority, and cultural legacy embedded in Māori performing arts. This name gifted to the programme carries a depth far beyond a basic, literal translation of the English name. It imbues a wairua and embodies an identity that anchors the kaupapa of

performance, enriches its intent, and upholds its enduring mana.

Ngā Mana Whakairo a Toi: Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts was accredited by the New Zealand Qualification Authority in 2010; the panel was chaired by Professor Ranginui Walker. The degree built upon the Level 5 Manu Kōrihi certificate, which served as a scaffolded framework leading into Levels 6 and 7 of an undergraduate qualification.

The journey toward accreditation was not an easy one. NZQA had no precedent for a qualification of this kind. While undergraduate qualifications in performing arts existed (in drama, music for example), there were no kapa haka-based degrees⁷. Tensions between what Māori communities wanted, what Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiāraangi proposed, and what NZQA required were worked through in the accreditation process. For example, some NZQA panel members questioned whether Māori performing arts were 'academic' enough to constitute a degree, and it was pointed out by the wānanga panel representative (Prof Patricia Johnston) that other performance degrees already existed. The difference between them and this one was the focus on Māori performance.

However, the process forced critical conversations about how mātauranga Māori could be both recognised and safeguarded within a tertiary system driven by Western frameworks which did not support Māori knowledge, were openly hostile towards mātauranga Māori, or acknowledged and accepted colonial views of what counted for Māori.⁸

The wānanga leadership were required to navigate these spaces and ensure that the Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts not only met regulatory standards but also that qualities of kaupapa Māori were not compromised.

Programme Objectives and Design

The Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts combines practical and theoretical learning: students train in kapa haka, mōteatea, haka, waiata, and indigenous composition, while also studying cultural context, whakapapa, and performance theory.

The role of the soloist within the kapa is central: while

⁷ Currently there are 32 Performance Based Degrees offered in New Zealand. (<https://www.educations.com/performing-arts/new-zealand> accessed 15/01/25)

⁸ Johnston 1998, "He Ao Rereke".



collective uniformity is celebrated, the programme also makes space for individual creativity and voice.

Ngā Mana Whakairo a Toi: Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts has been developed by Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi to recognise the academic contribution of kaihaka involved in kapa haka teams, preparing them to pursue employment in a wide range of professions as well as serve our communities locally, nationally and internationally. The main objective for the programme is to: ‘Provide an educational programme for specialist “kaihaka” who will graduate as role models of Māori Performing Arts achieving excellence and therefore contributing to quality community-based wānanga mātauranga’.⁹

Ngā Mana Whakairo a Toi: The Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts programme aims to:

- i. Provide opportunities for kaihaka to become involved in Māori Performing Arts studies.
- ii. Acknowledge the validity of Māori cultural mātauranga and practices in Māori Performing Arts studies.
- iii. Provide the opportunity for the development of te reo, kawa, tikanga, waiata, haka and mōteatea of iwi relevant to the rohe in which the programme is being delivered.
- iv. Provide a platform that celebrates Māori Performing Arts performance diversity and the unique bodies of mātauranga ā-iwi, ā-hapū, ā-whānau, ā-kapa haka that inform that style of performance. Develop expertise and extend mātauranga in the field of Māori Performing Arts studies and production.
- v. Promote the development and validity of Māori values and mātauranga in Māori Performing Arts studies.
- vi. Develop graduates with skills and mātauranga to contribute to the social and cultural aspirations of Māori, iwi, hapū, whānau and marae and/or gain employment in a wide range of fields¹⁰.

The successfulness of the Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts (829 graduates in 2024) is due in part to its unique delivery model, a co-partnership approach with kapa haka around the country.

The teaching and learning and relationships created to

9 Ngā Mana Whakairo a Toi: Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts Revised Programme Document (Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi, 2025) 24.

10 Revised Programme Document, 2025, 23–25

manage mātauranga on the Ngā Mana Whakairo a Toi: Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts programme are located within Takapau-whāriki pedagogy.

As noted in the Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts Programme Document,¹¹ Takapau-whāriki are ceremonial mats that are used in expressing, capturing and sharing mātauranga. In traditional times, these mats were woven and used to create a space where all elements, both tangible and intangible, aligned to allow for mātauranga to be shared, created, witnessed or experienced.

Children of nobility would be born on finely woven mats; the sacred symbols of moko were tapped into the skin of men and women while lying on a custom-made takapau; loved ones rested in state on takapau before reaching their final resting place. Takapau woven in whānau specific patterns would often be gifted to visitors and would be made to celebrate a special occasion in Māori society. They were the space where people sat and shared their views of the world’s issues and where some of the most sacred of mātauranga and tikanga were practised and passed on.

Takapau are signs of great mana and distinction. Their very make up being the determining factor in acknowledging the significance of one’s mana as mentioned in the oriori written by Ngāti Porou composer, Te Māperetahi for her mokopuna Tāmaunga-o-te-rangi:

*Taku kore rawa nei ki te rau kiekie; taku noho tonu
nei ki te rau harakeke.
(I am not from those who sit on a takapau made of
kiekie; I am of this flax woven mat.)*

The recital of waiata oriori, and the vast amounts of iwi specific mātauranga became locked within the kaihaka and the transmission of that mātauranga which took place on takapau. In contemporary times, takapau fulfil traditional duties as well as taking on the symbolic role of filling a cultural deficit gap, as a result of colonisation. They adorn where tīpuna, where whakairo and where mate within many Māori communities, in an effort to reclaim iwi mana and offer a tangible cultural touchstone that contemporary floor covering cannot provide. The metaphoric use of takapau in oratory is constantly evolving but is always mentioned as a surety, a constant or something that will always be a returning point or foundation to breed greatness.

11 Revised Programme Document, 2025, 37–39



*Whakaara i o tātau mate i roto i ngā kaupapa o te
hunga ora; hai takapau mō te wānanga; hai takapau
mō te kōrero.*

*(Let our deceased be spoken about in the doings of
the living as a takapau for debate and discussion for
us all.)*

Takapau as a pedagogy uses the symbolism of a takapau or takapau-whāriki to capture the way mātauranga is acknowledged, celebrated, extended, packaged and shared in Ngā Mana Whakairo a Toi: Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts programme. It also informs how we build, maintain and develop our relationships with kapa haka teams and kaihaka we engage with. We do this by symbolically using a takapau-whāriki made up of three elements to manage mātauranga: mana, tapu and wānanga.

Mana recognises the ownership of mātauranga, its origin and its intention. In the context of the programme it recognises the mana of kapa haka teams, leaders, tutors, composers, kaihaka, tumu-kōrero, associated iwi and marae and their relationship with Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi and the Ngā Mana Whakairo a Toi: Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts programme. The mana of the art form of Māori performing arts rests with them.

Tapu recognises the nature of the mātauranga that is intended to be shared in the programme; how and where it is shared and with whom. It includes things like performance diversity and the unique bodies of mātauranga ā-iwi, ā-hapū, ā-whānau, ā-kapa haka that inform that style of performance, and te reo, kawa, tikanga, waiata, haka and mōteatea of iwi relevant to the rohe in which the programme is being delivered.

Wānanga recognises the act of sitting on the takapau-whāriki to share mātauranga. In the context of the programme, it is symbolic of the relationships created, nourished and maintained to optimise the sharing of mātauranga. That is, the relationship between Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi, kapa haka teams and kaihaka (kaihaka of the BMA programme) for the purpose of sharing, shaping, analysing, developing and extending mātauranga pertaining to Māori performing arts.

This takapau-whāriki is laid out metaphorically for Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi to build a relationship with kapa haka teams and their kaihaka, as a foundation to manage mātauranga.¹²

The pedagogy of the takapau-whāriki thus ensures that
12 *Revised Programme Document 2025, 37–39*

learning is not top-down, instead, it values the mātauranga held within whānau, hapū, iwi, and performing arts communities. Teaching strategies like the sharing of taonga tuku iho reinforce this grounding.

Every tauira brings with them a unique whakapapa and worldview, and the programme acknowledges that the mātauranga they carry is just as important as what they will learn through formal instruction. No other tertiary institution in Aotearoa offers a degree with this level of community collaboration and cultural grounding.

Looking Ahead

The success of the Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts led to the development of Te Rautoki a Toi: Postgraduate Diploma in Māori Performing Arts, accredited in 2021 and first delivered in 2022. To date, 40 tauira have enrolled and 15 have graduated. The continued partnership with Te Matatini (including scholarships), demonstrates the strength and relevance of these higher learning opportunities.

Both programmes (Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts and the PGDipMPA) now attract tauira from across Aotearoa and Australia. The teaching staff, many of whom are leaders and performers in the Māori arts world, ensure that the curriculum remains deeply connected to both tradition and innovation.

Ngā Mana Whakairo a Toi and Te Rautoki a Toi are more than qualifications. They are living expressions of whakapapa, cultural responsibility, and Māori sovereignty. By combining traditional practice with academic excellence, they prepare tauira not just to perform but to lead.

*He toi whakairo, he mana tangata.
(Where there is artistic excellence,
there is human dignity)¹³*

Nā Piri Sciascia

The graduate profile is underpinned by the mission statement, 'Whakakiia ngā kete ā ngā uri o Awanuiārangi ki ngā taonga tuku iho, ki te hōhonutanga me te whānuitanga o te mātauranga kia tū tangata ai rātau i ngā rā e tū mai nei'.

Graduates of Ngā Mana Whakairo a Toi: Bachelor of Māori
13 Piri Sciascia, acceptance speech at Te Waka Toi
Awards in 2016. [https://www.rnz.co.nz/national/programmes/
teahikaa/audio/2018730971/influence-piri-sciascia](https://www.rnz.co.nz/national/programmes/teahikaa/audio/2018730971/influence-piri-sciascia)





Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts Team. *From left to right: Ryan Te Wara, Tiahuia Ropitini, Arona Maui, Te Taepa Kameta, Joylene Rohe-Karauria, Tipene Tihema-Biddle.*

Performing Arts programme will be valued repositories of mātauranga Māori, te reo Māori, tikanga Māori and Māori performing arts; ensuring graduates have a mātauranga and skill base fully recognised within Māori communities. Taura will be able to demonstrate and describe the performing arts that are uniquely Māori. In addition to being practical exponents of Māori performing arts, graduates will also have an extensive mātauranga of and contribute to the literature associated with these art forms.

Once the values and attributes of the takapau-whāriki is laid and acknowledged, kaihaka that have completed the Ngā Mana Whakairo a Toi: Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts programme will have acquired an education in specialist mātauranga, general intellectual skills and capabilities, and have attained the cultural praxis to equip them for employment and citizenship (both national and iwi-based). It will also lay the foundations for a lifetime of continuous learning and personal development.

Acknowledgments

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About the Authors

Sheree Spooner is a respected leader and long-standing advocate for Māori performing arts and Māori education. She is currently the Head of the School of Undergraduate Studies at Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangī, where she also formerly served as the National Programme Coordinator and Lecturer for the Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts. With over 30 years of experience tutoring the esteemed kapa haka Te Rerenga Kōtuku, Sheree has

'shaped' generations of performers and cultural leaders. Her commitment to kapa haka stems from its ability to connect people to their language, identity, and history while fostering excellence and resilience. She views the BMA as a critical platform for nurturing the next generation of Māori artists, academics, and knowledge-holders. For Sheree, kapa haka is not just performance – it is an archive of mātauranga Māori and a living force for cultural renewal.

Junior is a lifelong exponent of kapa haka and a respected academic and cultural leader. He is currently the Head of Te Apa Marae Kura: School of Iwi Development at Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangī, where he also served for six years as a lecturer and Academic Advisor on the Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts programme. A passionate kaihaka since before starting primary school, Junior has over 25 years of experience across all aspects of kapa haka – from performer and composer to judge and regional delegate. He is the current Head Tutor of Kōkō Tangiwai, a kapa haka based in Ōtautahi that won the Waitaha Regionals and represented their rohe at Te Matatini 2025. Junior's academic and cultural contributions are substantial. He has judged at all levels of competition – including Mana Kuratahi, Kura Tuarua, and Te Matatini – for more than 15 years, composed haka and waiata for nearly two decades, and coordinated many kaupapa.

A member of the Waitaha Cultural Council since 2006 and the region's Te Matatini delegate since 2015, Junior has worked tirelessly to uplift the status of Māori performing arts in Te Waipounamu and nationally. As a father of four, Junior is committed to ensuring that the legacy of kapa haka and mātauranga Māori continues to inspire future generations. For him, Ngā Mana Whakairo a Toi is not just a course name – it is a lived practice: he toi pūkenga, he toi wānanga, he toi whakairo i raro i te maru o Toi-te-Huatahi. Ko te haka taku kai i te ao, i te pō.





Titiro Ki Whakapūnakeki te Maunga Whakarongo ki Ngā Tai

Joylene Rohe-Karauria

Ko Whakapūnake te maunga

Ko Te Wairoa Hōpūpū Hōnengenenge

Matangirau te awa

Ko Takitimu te waka

Ko Te Rauhinā te marae

Ko Ngāti Kaahu te hapū

Ko Ngāti Kahungunu te iwi

Ko Joylene Rohe-Karauria ahau



*Picture taken at
Te Matatini, Herenga
Waka, Herenga Tangata
ki Tāmaki Makaurau,
2023.*

Growing Up With Kapa haka

My humble beginnings in kapa haka started in the early 1980s at the opening of our whare tipuna, Te Rauhinā. Raised on the marae and in the lines of our hapū-based kapa haka, my love for performing waiata and haka started here. Haka has been instrumental in my personal development, shaping me to be the woman I am today, he kaihaka, he kaiako haka, he kaitito; he wahine kōrero Māori, he wahine whakapono hoki; he hoa wahine, he Māmā. Katoa enei, he poupou o tōku whare.

I have performed at various festivals and competitions for most of my life and these performances have been vital to my haka growth, for example at the Wairoa district kapa haka festivals, Tamararo (secondary school competitions), Atawhaitia kapa haka competitions at Wairoa College, Māori Music awards, Kahungunu Waitangi Day celebrations.

One of my highlights as a young child was performing under the tutelage of renowned composer Tommy Taurima of Rongomaiwahine descent. I was 12 years old at the time and learnt to sing in triad vocal musicianship. Triads are the basic form of singing notes and can be combined to create harmonies and harmonic progressions. From that time to now, I can still hear and pick out a second soprano note from the skills I learnt subconsciously as a 12 year old. At the age of 15, I performed at my first Te Matatini at Hawera.

Te Rauhinā, Te Rerenga Kōtuku and recently Matangirau kapa haka have been my space of learning and further development as a performer, teacher and practitioner





of kapa haka. Kapa haka was once defined by Sir Timoti Karetu as the dance of a noble people. I have been a kaiako haka since I was 16 years old, sharing and teaching waiata with tamariki of my community of Wairoa. As a teenager I met my now husband in the kapa haka circles. We both share the same passion, 'haka and Wairoa'. We have shared competitive stages, as performers and recently as kaiako.

My kapa haka learnings have been attained over the years from rangatira such as the late Tommy Taurima, Dr Joseph Te Rito, and Dr Timoti Karetu. Well-known composers from my hapū such as, my pakeke Anaru Anaru, Lena Manuel and Whiti Rātapu, and also Sid and Anne Kershaw of the Pātea Māori Club, Naina Puhina Buxton, and haka practitioners Tania Rātapu, Anaru Rātapu, Elliot and Sheree Spooner, Christine Neri, Juanita Cotter and Kararaina Rangihau have all been influential in my kapa haka growth and development, be it in te reo Māori, composition, kaupapa waiata, te tū, haka tikanga ā-iwi, or vocal musicianship.

In the earlier years of my life, performances were that of the more whakangahau type, merely for enjoyment and entertainment. Kapa haka practices followed whakamoemiti on a Sunday at our marae. We had a small wharekai, and the kitchen area, which was even smaller, had an open fire with a copper in the corner. My aunties and kuia would dry the tea towels on the rail that ran across the mantle of the fireplace. These same aunties were the voices in the rows of our kapa haka, that filled our wharekai.

This was no different to other marae who also held kapa haka practices. I remember 'over the hill' from our marae

(Taihoa marae) and their kapa haka practices started bang on 6pm on a Sunday night. Our hapū would often attend these practices too.

When I entered my teens, I was introduced to 'competitive haka' and all that that entails (like practising, more practising and yet more practising). Competitive haka was relatively new in our humble little community of Wairoa, however, the intense training was an adrenaline rush to my generation of rangatahi, and we welcomed it with open arms. We attended the Gisborne competition called 'Tamararo'14 in 1995 and 1996, and us Kahungunu folk would get slaughtered in the competition!!! It wasn't until 1997 that we had a change of leadership at Wairoa College, which then saw us competing in our own iwi of Ngāti Kahungunu, and we saw a rise in confidence and skill. Wairoa College then won the Hawkes Bay Schools Kapa Haka Competition for the years following (1997 to 1999).

Passion

One afternoon while I waited for my ride to kapa haka practice with Tommy Taurima, I experienced for the first time the power of song, wairua, ihi and wehi. The waiata ā-ringa was Te Rangihau, the kapa haka was Te Waka Huia from the 1988 Aotearoa Traditional Māori Performing Arts Festival held in Whangārei.

I had had a few inspiring moments in my short life at that time, as a twelve year old, but I soon felt a mauri that I had

14 Tamararo is the country's longest-running regional kapa haka competition, established in 1952 as a fundraising event for the Māori Anglican church across the East Coast.



never felt before. With the opening sound of the pūtātara and the kōrero from Ngapo Wehi, the soloist, I was transfixed and time froze, as they farewelled a stalwart of Ngāi Tūhoe, of Māoridom, through waiata. The way the camera captured the sun on the faces, and then the shot of both the soloist and one of the wahine performers in the front row together, was an emotional moment that touched my heart as a young girl. The group's powerful, melancholic voices struck a chord in my heart.

This moment was a turning point for me, opening a door to a new understanding of the mutual exchange in performance, which I feel is important to add here. I was not raised in te reo Māori, I am a proud second language learner of te reo Māori. Therefore, the understanding of what was happening at that moment, derived from mauri, from wairua – not from my understanding of te reo Māori.

My passion for kapa haka, guides my enthusiasm and commitment to kapa haka and its preservation. According to the Merriam Webster Dictionary, 'passion' refers to a strong feeling of enthusiasm or excitement either for something or about doing something. Passions are often something you would love to do constantly. Derek Lardelli called in to the crowd at the Te Matatini festival held in Wellington in 2019, 'He aha te kai? He haka te kai!' loosely translated as 'What is the main meal? Haka is the main meal!' and kapa haka has been my 'main meal'. It has been my lifestyle choice, the fun, the not so fun, the competitive, the non-competitive, the good, the bad, the ugly, the exciting!

Career

Such was my passion for kapa haka, that I entered my current place of employment at Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi as a lecturer for the Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts (BMPA) – Ngā Mana Whakairo a Toi, in 2020. This pathway followed my own pursuit of the degree (BMPA), and then moving on to be a kapa haka coordinator for the programme for kapa haka of my iwi. It has all been a natural and wonderful progression up the poutama toward my own Whare Haka.

The BMPA aligns with the kapa haka competitive environment allowing opportunities for kaihaka to validate their contribution and skill development within their community-based, iwi-based kapa haka environments. While Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi maintains the overall academic priorities for this programme, the delivery is resourced by kapa haka rōpū, which I believe is the most exciting part of the programme.

The aim of this programme is to build certificate level knowledge into a degree programme, where kapa haka, performance, compositions, research, history and te reo Māori are acknowledged academically. Kapa haka is not just a pastime: it is the enhancement of performance skills and techniques that require dedication, knowledge of te reo, knowledge of whakapapa, our iwi, marae and tikanga, that is on par with any other performance profession. This is what enticed me to pursue a career in kapa haka when I was a student passionate about kapa haka, what also kept me there as a kapa haka coordinator and, when the opportunity presented itself, as a lecturer on the programme.

Observations



The reality of what I saw in a photo taken in the 1980's, dimmed over the years as we saw more families moving out of town for work and my older cousins leaving home for tertiary education. We saw school closures, and also kaumātua numbers diminishing. The village I grew up in changed drastically as I, too, moved out of Wairoa for tertiary studies. During the 11 years away from home, the desire to see it return to the way it was when I was younger became a burning need.

When I was a child, our marae-based kapa haka went from kapa haka practices on a Sunday afternoon following whakamoemiti, to Monday evenings, to the odd occasion, to nothing at all. This was also happening on a few of the other marae in Wairoa, too. What was once a hapū effort, with our whānau of all ages, shapes and sizes, then became a sport 'only the kids go to'. This is what I observed over the years.

But the introduction of competitive kapa haka to our small town, saw those who performed for the mere fun and enjoyment, then taking supportive roles, as spectators, uniform coordinators and fundraisers. The rebirth and rejuvenation of kapa haka began!!!





What has developed from all of this, is a kaupapa I have called Pā Haka, which is the regrowth, rebirth and rejuvenation of kapa haka on our marae. While Pā Haka is a non-competitive festival that uplifts kapa haka and reinforces identity and pride in coming from a small community such as ours at Wairoa, Pā Haka is also contributing to a healthy, thriving pā that I once grew up on.

I am currently enrolled in my Master’s degree at Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi and my kaupapa for my thesis is ‘Pā Haka’. I intend to carry out a case study on my marae (linking it to other marae and the regrowth of kapa haka in the Wairoa region) and will examine:

- 1. cultural Identity and revitalisation;
- 2. intergenerational knowledge transmission;
- 3. community wellbeing;
- 4. cultural practice and innovation and;
- 5. sustainability and future planning.

My rangahau, for my master’s degree will examine, how Pā Haka uplifts kapa haka and identity in our community, contributing to the growth of a healthy thriving pā.





‘Ko te Reo e Tōiriiri ana i te Riu o Waiapu’

Georgina Kerekere

Hei Kupu Whakataki

Ki te taha o taku pāpā

Ko Pohautea te maunga

Ko Takā te awa

Ko Tikapa a Hinekopeka te marae

Ko Hineauta, ko Pōkai ngā hapū

Ko Ngāti Pōrou te iwi

Ko Riria Kawhena rāua ko George Gilliespie Boyd

ngā mātua tipuna.

Ki taha o taku māmā

Ko Pātangata te maunga

Ko Wharekahika te awa

Ko Hinemaurea te marae

Ko Te Whānau a Tūwhakairiora te hapū

Ko Ngati Pōrou te iwi

Ko Te Ataarangi Tūkino rāua ko Pineamine Poutu ngā mātua tipuna.

Mōteatea Hei Whare Ora - Mōteatea as a living narrative

(Presented at Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts Symposium, September 2024. This is a summation of the Presentation).

My presentation centred on mōteatea as a form of cultural memory, particularly compositions by kuia such as Harata Tangikuku from Te Whānau o Ruataupare in Tokomaru Bay. Her waiata captured grief, longing, and connection to place through metaphors of local flora and fauna – like the kihikihi (cicada), rimu puka (kelp), and kākā (native parrot). These images speak to personal loss while grounding us in the local landscape. The presentation further emphasised that mōteatea are not just historical texts to be studied on paper: they are meant to be performed, voiced, and felt. The act of singing mōteatea connects us through breath and vibration to our tupuna. It is through the rhythm, tone, and pauses in performance that the true essence of these compositions is activated. The body becomes the vessel through which memory and meaning are carried forward.

Ngā Whare Wānanga Tawhito – Ancient Houses of Knowledge

The presentation explored the significant role of ancient whare wānanga in Tairāwhiti, such as Te Rāwheoro, Tapere nui a Whatonga, and Te Wharau. These were not only sites of learning but of cultural preservation and innovation. Mōteatea such as Te Waiata Tangi a Rangiuia were shared as examples of how grief and ritual also conveyed cosmology, environmental ethics, and intergenerational responsibility.



Ko te reo te tuapapa – Language grounded in the whenua.

The reo spoken and sung in mōteatea is inseparable from the land it comes from. For example, the reo echoes across the white cliffs of Tokomaru and through the valleys of Waiapu, holding within it the textures of the environment, the stories of our tīpuna, and the mana of place. This is a reminder that language is not only a tool for communication but a landscape of memory and belonging.

Mōteatea hei rongoa – Mōteatea as a healing agent.

The audience were encouraged to reflect on their own iwi connection and their role in the intergenerational work of cultural revitalisation. The healing and empowerment that comes through engaging with mōteatea for individuals, whānau, and the wider iwi is not just academic work, it is whakapapa work.

Ngā Kōrero Tuku Iho – Tupuna legacy and responsibility.

The session concluded with a wero, a challenge to honour and continue this mahi. Studying, composing, and performing mōteatea is a way to uphold the legacy of those who came before and ensure that our voices – and our reo – remain strong for those who come after.

Kupu Whakakapi – Closing.

'Ko te reo e tōiriiri ana i te riu o Waiapu' is more than a poetic phrase, it's a living truth. Through mōteatea, especially when sung, our reo continues to resonate through time and place. It carries our stories, emotions, and identity from the past into the future. *Ka waiata tonu atu tātou, ka maumahara tonu ai, ka toitū tonu ai.*

About the Author

Georgina is the Deputy Head of School for the School of Undergraduate Studies at Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangī. She has been with the Wānanga for 11 years, working in a variety of roles. With a background in Māori education, Georgina has experience in both teaching and quality assurance, including time with NZQA and contract work with the Ministry of Education. Most recently, she was the lead evaluator for *Te Hurihanganui*, a major research project for the Wānanga that focused on evidence of what makes a difference for Māori in education. Alongside her professional work, Georgina has been deeply involved in kapa haka for more than 25 years, judging at local, regional and national levels, including Te Matatini. This wealth of experience, combined with her commitment to contributing to future generations, has inspired her presentation and to begin her PhD journey. She is currently in the early stages of shaping her proposal. Her PhD journey is guided by a deep commitment to kaupapa Māori and the strength of wāhine Māori. At its heart, her research explores the reclamation of moko kauae as an act of tino rangatiratanga and a living pūrākau, shaped by the layered experiences of urban whakapapa. It is about revealing the story, inscribing identity and challenging the forces that have tried to silence it – *Tāripitia te kōrero, uhi, wero!*





Tōku Marae, Tōku Ahureitanga!

Tipene Tihema-Biddle

Ko Hikurangi te maunga
Ko Rangitaiki te awa
Ko Waiohau te marae
Ko Te Umutaoroa te wharekai
Ko Patuheuheu, Ngāti Haka ngā hapū
Ko Ngāi Tūhoe te iwi.
Arā hoki ōku here ki roto o Ngāti Korokī Kahukura
me Ngāti Pāhauwera.
Kō Tipene Tihema-Biddle ahau.

Introduction

Kapa haka continues to take the world by storm, sharing a unique insight into the people and culture of Aotearoa New Zealand. Most recently, the Olympic Games representation of New Zealand in Paris 2024 fostered a strong Māori identity, incorporating kapa haka to promote our indigenous presence in the greatest event of world athleticism. Furthermore, a contingent of Ngāti Whātua, mana whenua of the Auckland districts, were the face of Aotearoa at the America’s Cup held in Spain 2024, sailing us to another international victory. As we continue to define ourselves as a people and nation, kapa haka is becoming more of an integral part of that identification process.

Positionality

I am lecturer in the Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts programme delivered by Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangī and am enrolling in my doctoral degree. Alongside my academic aspirations, I am the current kapa haka tutor of Te Rōpū Haka o Ngāti Haka Patuheuheu, a kapa ā-hapū based in the Tūhoe region of Waiohau where I live.

I have been a member of kapa haka judging panels for both regional and tribal competitions ranging from primary school level, through to secondary and adult festivals. Another role I have is as a delegate for Te Taunuke Kororangi (Tūhoe kapa haka delegate) who represent the many kapa haka and participating teams of Te Hui Ahurei a Tūhoe, a tribal festival fostering Tūhoe language and



culture though kapa haka, sports and other activities. These experiences alongside others have helped to reinforce my passion, focus and support for kapa haka and my unwavering belief in its transformational abilities.

My passion for kapa haka stems from my childhood growing up in Wellington. Both my parents moved from their homelands as part of the urban migration in the 60s and 80s, to pursue work opportunities. Living away from their whānau (my mother from Waiohau, and my father from Raupunga) meant they made new relationships with Māori who had also relocated to the urban areas of Wellington. Sport and schooling were some of the spaces in which Māori would often gather and build whānau away from home, thus creating another home for us, their children. Kapa haka was also one of those spaces where communities were established and had become long-lasting kāinga for many.

Kapa haka contributed greatly to cultural sustainability in the Wellington region. The oldest kapa haka group, Ngāti Pōneke, was established in 1937. Tū Te Maungaroa, the Wellington-based Tūhoe group, was established in the early 90s to compete in the 1993 regional competition, qualifying for the 1994 Aotearoa Traditional Māori Performing Arts Festival (known now as Te Matatini). They then gained a spot in the finals of that festival. Pukeahu (also established in 1987), was another show-stopping group of that era. These rōpū were my first kapa haka influences, alongside the national icons of the time, Te Waka Huia (Tāmaki Makaurau, Auckland), Waihirere Māori Club (Tairāwhiti, East Coast) and Tūhourangi Ngāti Wāhiao (Te Arawa, Rotorua district), to name a few.

I become more involved in kapa haka as a performer in my secondary schooling years. Our tutors of the time at Naenae College in the Hutt Valley were Te Teira Davis, Hollie Pohatu, Ngaire McClutchie, George Ria and Mihaere Kirby, some great influencers of kapa haka as we know it today. I was unaware of the calibre of kaiako I had experienced, but they all had planted great seeds of knowledge, not only regarding kapa haka but also lessons I would carry throughout my life.

Furthermore, my Wellington-based Tūhoe relatives of Tūhoe ki Pōneke imparted a sense and yearning for my Tūhoetanga – my being as a Tūhoe person. This was nurtured by our pakeke of the time, Hema and Pou Temara who led Tūhoe ki Pōneke, Tū Te Maungaroa, for many years. The seeds of knowledge and inspiration that they sowed would fruit later in my life and play an integral part in my future as Māori and in kapa haka.

It was also in my secondary school years where my tutors nurtured me into kapa haka tutorship. My creativity in lyrical composition, music and movement was free and to some extent, wild. Fortunately, my mentors and teachers saw potential for more, and encouraged me and others to compose and teach for the 2004 national festival that we would participate in.

As a student-tutor, the campaign came with many challenges. One of these was having to direct and teach my peers, who at times did not appreciate the feedback I had to offer, which had implications for my relationships. The role would see me clash with my own tutors and have me questioning if I was worthy of this position. These experiences would prepare me for moving into tutorship. As one of my tutors said, 'You will become a tutor far before your time.'

My teenage years would see one of the most pivotal moments of my life – relocating to Waiohau. It is where my mother grew up and Waiohau, a rural settlement in the Tūhoe nation, was 'worlds apart' from my urban lifestyle and upbringing. It caused a whirlwind of feelings for me, upon reflection, although I was well prepared to step into this new journey of discovery into who I was, with kapa haka as a vehicle to carry me through.

On moving back to Waiohau, Te Hui Ahurei a Tūhoe training was in full force. Our marae/hapū group Ngāti Haka Patuheuheu, was preparing for the forthcoming festival. As nervous as I was, I threw myself into participating at my first Ahurei, in 2005. As part of the campaign there was much more to learn than just a performance bracket. It came with experiences of whanaungatanga, learning whakapapa connections, putting faces to the names, and associating with more than just a team of performers. There was an intricate stream of wairua flowing within the rōpū members, one which was built on kin ties and an understanding of Tūhoetanga, of Matemateāone. I would become overwhelmed by a sense of aroha, a feeling that I belonged. I attribute my smooth integration back into my people to kapa haka and its ability to pave a way for me to learn about who I was as a Tūhoe person, as a descendant of Ngāti Haka, Patuheuheu.

My introduction through kapa haka allowed me to enter other activities and responsibilities within my hapū. At the age of twenty-one, I was elected as the Waiohau Marae Committee secretary. I had no idea what I was doing but learnt very quickly about the role and more importantly, about my people. I would soon realise how much Tūhoe would play a huge part in nurturing me and what they expected of me in other roles moving forward.



Kapa haka provided other opportunities for me to contribute as a kaiwaiata and later, as a kaikōrero on the paetapu. I felt a great sense of compassion for these roles as I witnessed the decline of our exponents over time, many of whom now have passed. Alongside one of my relatives who is the same age as me, I would be encouraged to take on important leadership roles conducting tikanga practices on the marae, as well as governance and operational duties. We were heavily involved as kaitiaki for our manuhiri, hapū and tikanga, as we still are today. Kapa haka, I believe, had set me well on my path so I may continue to provide effective leadership for my hapū and marae.

Alongside these roles, I soon succeeded to the position of head tutor for our hapū kapa haka. My tuakana Dr. Hohepa Tamehana had given over 20 years of service as the head tutor and would go on to establish another kapa, Ōruakōrau, associated to his father's side at Ngāti Koura, Ruatoki. I remember him saying, 'You have all the skills for the job'. Although I had experience as a tutor with secondary schools, this was my first time taking a lead role with an adult group. It was quite daunting at the beginning. At my first muster, the wharekai initially held over 50 people attending. The expectations were high for me to provide a performance bracket of quality and an environment that my people would thrive in. After my first campaign as head tutor, I became aware of a greater purpose for my placement in this role. It incorporated a timeline of learnings, challenges and opportunities that would see me delve deeper into my master's study; a starting point in applying myself as a kairangahau.

Ngāti Haka Patuheuheu and BMPA

In 2018 I became involved with the Bachelor of Māori performing arts, Ngā Mana Whakairo a Toi, through one of my fellow master's students, a good friend, Naomi Herewini-Houia. We both were at the end of completing our master's degrees and both of our kaupapa were centred around hapū development in kapa haka. At the time, I was coming to the end of my research project, which focused on developing a strategic plan for the development of kapa haka for my hapū, Ngāti Haka Patuheuheu. Upon forming some key goals for the strategic plan, an area I had identified as needing attention was education.

The Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts delivered by Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangī aligned with my aspirations to provide an educational opportunity to further develop kaihaka and whānau from my hapū. As the course focused on researching our own stories,

compositions and identity, this was a way to document and build a body of knowledge unique to our hapū kapa, Ngāti Haka Patuheuheu. I will extend on how this has contributed to my proposed doctoral studies in the final part of this publication.

My role at the time, was as Kapa Coordinator for Ngāti Haka Patuheuheu and a cohort of taura were initially enrolled. Although many of the taura were kaihaka or performers, we also had several of our pakeke or elders enrol who supported the journey. The experience was invaluable for us as a kapa. It encouraged some to step up to roles they had not participated in before, from karanga to whaikōrero, through to composing their own waiata. It also allowed them to be part of research initiatives looking at tribal histories and understanding such disciplines as mōteatea; understanding words and context behind compositions that are hundreds of years old.

Throughout the three years they had built great confidence to participate in marae protocols and practices that has now strengthened our capacity on the paepae and our marae. This has been a great success for our hapū and at the end of the programme we had seven of our original cohort complete and graduate. Two of that cohort went on to pursue their master's studies and have since completed and graduated. I believe the journey through the Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts had been the catalyst for realising their potential not only as active researchers, but as faces of hope, inspiring others of the hapū to take up higher learning aspirations. It has also contributed greatly to the succession of leadership roles in tutoring kapa haka, as research plays an integral part in its continuation.

Toward the end of the third and final year of the Ngāti Haka Patuheuheu cohort completing their degrees, I was fortunate to gain a role within the Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts team as a lecturer. Apart from experiencing the great value of the programme through my own kapa, my role as a lecturer, enabled me to witness other transformative attributes of the programme with kapa from around the country. Kapa come from unique backgrounds and different regions, which is a testament to the diversity of the programme.

Where to next – the doctoral journey

This has led me into my proposed doctoral journey, following on from my master's studies completed in 2019. As mentioned previously, my master's exegesis looked at the history of my own kapa ā-hapū, Ngāti Haka

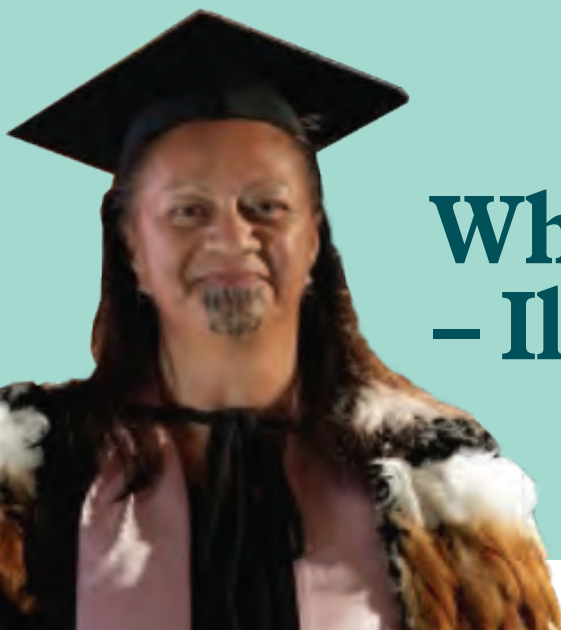


Patuheuheu, and the unique tutoring methodologies utilised, which extended also to tribal techniques from other tutors from the iwi of Ngāi Tūhoe. It also highlighted some of the issues faced by a 'younger' generation of tutors we are seeing more commonly today. It asks the question: how do we foster leadership in this area, and how do we sustain our cultural and tribal uniqueness in this easily influenced, forever changing, kapa haka world. This has provided a good foundation to extend on in my potential doctoral inquiry, and a slight pivot to a more specific underlying issue experienced by many.

My personal reflections and observations as both a kapa haka tutor of my hapū kapa and the chairman of my marae trust suggest our marae are in a dire state of loneliness and unoccupancy. There are few people upholding the tikanga protocols and practices, which often are left for the kaumātua or elders, and the succession of younger generations to take up these roles and responsibilities is not obvious. This is coupled with a lack of consistent training space and place for these protocols and practices, which is also a concern. From tikanga to governance and committee roles, the generation gap is becoming more prevalent, and 'more hands' at the marae are much needed.

My doctoral proposal will focus on the notion of utilising kapa haka as a vehicle for marae and hapū development. There are several overarching objectives I will cover in this research. Firstly, I aim to identify the state of marae and hapū, and the underlying issues that they face, particularly around maintaining tikanga protocols, practices, marae management and governance roles. Secondly, I will analyse the value of kapa haka through literature and material. From my preliminary search, there is not substantial evidence on my research subject, therefore my hope is that this doctoral research may bridge this gap. One component of my investigation will also be to look at the value of iwi festivals in the revitalisation of tikanga practices – in particular Te Hui Ahurei a Tūhoe, the Tūhoe festival, which has now been running for over 50 years. A number of other iwi have adopted this concept and my research seeks to find what benefits and challenges are noted. Finally, I hope this research may provide a map for marae and hapū to share insights and strategies as to how we continue to foster whanaungatanga for the next generation in relation to their hapū and marae, create contingency and succession plans to see the longevity of our marae, and highlight the great value of kapa haka to further develop our people.





Whakamārama ki Uta – Illuminate the Land

Tamara Hapi

*Mihi mai ki a Raukawa ki Wharepūhunga,
Te Pae o Raukawa ki Mōkai, Ngāti Tahu,
Ngāti Whaoa ki Te Arawa, me Tūwharetoa.*

*Heoi, mihi mai ki ngā kōrero ngākau nui.
Tākiri mai te ata, hura mai te rā ki te pae
o Wharepūhunga*

*Tū mai rā Panetoki te okiokinga o ngā tūpuna,
Kauria te wai marino o Mangatūtū
Manaakihia ngā rau o Raukawa*

*Toi te mana o Takihiku
Hikina te mauri o Whakaterere
Honoa te pito o Puehutore*

*Kawea ngā ōhaki ki Te Rangimoeākau
Kia tū maia ki Whakamārama*

I timata taku nohonga ki te ao haka i taku tamarikitanga, i ahau e haere ana ki te marae i te taha o tōku kuia. I a au e whakarongo tahi ana ki tōku māmā me tōna reo rōreka. He manu tioriori, ā ko ia me ōna tuākana, teina hoki. I reira au ka ako i ngā mahi o te marae, arā, ko te haka, te waiata, te mōteatea me ngā tikanga Māori. Nā konā i tupu ai te mātauranga me te aroha ki ēnei taonga tuku iho. I whai wāhi mātou ki te whakangahau i te hapū me te hāpori – ahakoa kāore i pērā i ngā kapa haka o nāianei, he nui tonu te ihi, te wehi, me te wana i tau, i rongo. Ko te aroha ki te haka, ko te ngākau nui ki te tuku i ngā mahi o ngā tūpuna ki te ao, te tino take whakakaha, whakaihi, whakaora i a mātou.

I taku taenga atu ki te kura tuarua, ka kuhu atu au ki te kapa haka o te kura, ā, i whai wāhi au ki tētehi whakataetae ā-motu. He wheako whakahirahira – he kitenga kanohi, he kite i te taumata tiketike o ētehi atu kapa, ka puta te wawata kia piki au ki aua taumata. Ahakoa kāore mātou i eke, ka maumahara tonu au ki te waiata Pākehā i waiatahia ‘*We are the champions, my friend...*’ i te mutunga. Kāore mātou i toa i runga pepa, engari ka rongo te ngākau. I whakatinana mātou i ngā taonga tuku iho, i whakamana i ā mātou kaiako, ā, i kawea te wairua tika ki te papa haka.

I a au e pakeke ana, ka kuhu atu au ki te kuratini ki te ako i te reo me ōna tikanga. I reira, ka kuhu anō ki te ao haka – hei tautoko i te ako, hei huarahi hoki ki te whakamana i te reo. Ahakoa he aha te mahi, ka puta tonu he waiata, he kōrero – he mea ka tupu Māori noa i a mātou, i arohaina katoatia. Nā konā i whai wāhi anō au ki tētehi whakataetae ā-rohe, ā, i eke ki te taumata kia āhei te haere ki te whakataetae ā-motu. E rongo tonu ana me te mahara ake ki te roa o te rā me te pō ki te whakaharatau i ngā mahi kia rite, ā kia



kounga anō hoki. Koia tētehi āhuatanga uaua, taumaha, heoi he maharatanga mīharo, he tuakiritanga tonu.

I taku mutunga i aku mahi ki te kuratini, ka whai wāhi ki te whakaako i te reo ki tētehi pakihi hapori. I reira ka poipoia tonutia te reo me ngā tikanga – ā, ko te haka me te waiata i noho hei poutokomanawa o taua mahi.

Nā wai rā, ka kuhu atu au ki te ao whakaako i te kura tuarua. Ka nui taku pūmau ki te tautoko, ki te whakaako i te reo Māori me ngā mahi haka hei huarahi ako mā ngā tamariki o tērā kura tuarua. Ko te whāinga – kia Māori ai te ao o ā tātou tamariki, kia tū pakari rātou i raro i te maru o tō tātou reo, o tātou tikanga, ā, ko te haka hei waka kawē i tērā.

Koinei tōku ao haka i taku tamarikitanga tae rā ki taku pakeketanga. Heoi, hei ināianei kua waiho mā aku tamariki, mokopuna aua mahi nui e pīkau ki runga ātāmira, ko tāku he tautoko, he pao ki te whakanui, he tangi i te tirohanga atu. Koia taku tūranga, haere ake nei me te tito mōteatea inā e taea ana.

Introduction

In the realm of Māori performing arts, mōteatea holds the mana of generations — it is both remembrance and resurgence, both oriori and oranga. This composition, Whakamārama ki Uta, emerged from my studies within the Postgraduate Diploma in Māori Performing Arts (PGDip), a journey that required me not only to research and reflect but to compose from the heart, grounded in whakapapa, whenua, and wairua.

My mōteatea falls within the genre of Maimai Aroha – a traditional form that expresses deep affection, sorrow, and mourning for loved ones who have passed away. Maimai Aroha is more than lament; it is a tribute, a vessel through which the love and memory of the departed continue to live. Though the body may leave the physical world, Maimai Aroha reminds us that love endures, and the spiritual bond remains unbroken.

Whakamārama ki Uta (Māori version):

Tēnei au, tēnei au, tēnei au, e hokihoki mahara
Riporipo kau ana, tētere te moana roa e
He aha rā te pūtake, he aha rā te pūtake
Korekore e tutuki noa
Whakawhiti whenua, whakamana kupu ōhaki
Whakamārama ki uta e

E whae Parewera, e pā Tūwera
Kaipupuru whenua, kaipupuru toi ora
Taonga o te oranga, taonga mana motuhake
Hei aha rawa rā, hei aha rawa rā e, hei koha mā anamata
E whae Parewera, te utu nui, o whare tūpuna
Te Rangimoeākau, tū tonu rā,

E te Nuki, e kui, ringarau o te aroha
E Tame, e koro, ringaraupā o te mahi
I oti ai te hanga, i tutuki ngā wawata
E rū, Hinepare, e rū Hinepare, nāu rā te moemoeā
Hangangia he marae, kia kiia ai he tāngata
Puehutore, mokopuna, Puehutore whakatau rā

Honohono pito ora, honohono pito mata
E tupu e rea, raukura, Raukawa
Hei aho poutama, hei aho pounamu
Piki ake, kake ake, piki ake kake ake, te ara o Tāwhaki
Whāia te kahurangi ki te tihi o manono
Hei rā kai rauora, mō te mahunga

Taku rourou kiora, taku rourou toiora
Whakapono, tumanako, aroha nui rawa e
Pae tata, pae tawhiti, kia mau, kia ita
Tātai whakapapa, tātai whakaheke
Toitū te whenua, toitū te tangata
Whakakotahitanga, whakarauora iwi e
Whakamārama ki uta e

Illuminate the Land (English translation)

Here I am, here I am, here I am, pondering memories of
yesterday
Swirling and navigating the vast ocean surges
What truly is the origin, what truly is the origin
It cannot be grasped easily.
The exchange of lands, affirming the words of legacy
Illuminate the land

Lady Parewera, Sir Tūwera
Guardians of land, guardians of well-being
Treasures of life, treasures of sovereignty
For what purpose, for what purpose, as a gift for the
future
Lady Parewera, the great price of the ancestral house
Te Rangimoeākau, stand tall

Nuki, e kui, hands of love
Tame, e koro, industrious hands
The work is complete, the aspirations fulfilled
Hinepare e rū (rūruhi), Hinepare e rū (rūruhi) it was your
dream



Build a marae, so it may be said there is a people
Puehutore, descendants, Puehutore, be settled

Connecting the threads of life, connecting the threads of
the future

Grow and rise, beloved descendants of Raukawa
As a weaving strand of achievement, as an heirloom of
greenstone

Climb, ascend, climb, ascend the destined path of
Tāwhaki

Pursue excellence to the peak of wisdom
As a crown for life, as a plume of aspiration

My basket of life, my basket of well-being
Faith, hope, infinite love
Near horizons, far horizons, hold fast, hold firm
Genealogical lines, ancestral descent
The land endures, the people endure
Unity, reviving the people
Illuminate the land

Conclusion

Whakamārama ki Uta is a deeply personal expression of aroha, remembrance, and cultural affirmation. Through mōteatea and the genre of Maimai Aroha, this work honours the legacies of my tūpuna, the whenua they cared for, and the dreams they had for future generations. Composing and performing this mōteatea allowed me to step into the ancestral currents of expression, to weave memory with hope, and to offer a taonga for those who come after me. May this piece continue to illuminate the land, the people, and the path forward.

About the Author

Tamara Hapi (Ngāti Puehutore, Raukawa ki Wharepūhunga) is a dedicated educator, researcher, and cultural advocate based in Aotearoa. With over 25 years of experience in teaching and leadership, Tamara is currently pursuing doctoral research focused on the revitalisation of Māori pūrākau and identity formation for neurodiverse learners. She holds a Postgraduate Diploma in Māori Performing Arts and serves as National Programme Coordinator for Te Pōkaitahi Reo. Her mahi is grounded in whakapapa, whanaungatanga, and a commitment to uplifting her people through language, culture, and legacy.





Rūrukutia Tō Kahumaiwhiti – Rūrukutia Tō Rongomaiwhiti

Tūhoe Huata

Tū ana au ki runga i tōku maunga ko Tarawera

Ka titiro whakararo ki te waikarekare o Tarawera moana

Whakawhiti atu ki te awa o Puarenga

Ki Te Whakarewarewatanga o te ope tauā a Wāhiao

Ki te pākarito o Te Pākira

Tūtakarerewa ana tōku whare tūpuna ko Wāhiao,

*i te ātārangi o ōku maunga whakahī, ko Pohaturoa, ko
Tūturu*

Tū, tū, taiāha hā!

Ko Tūhoe Huata tōku ingoa.

Ko Te Arawa, ko Mataatua me Takitimu ōku waka.

*I tipu ake au i ngā rekereke o ōku kōeke o Tūhourangi
Ngāti Wāhiao engari, kei tōku taha Kahungunu, kei
Heretaunga māua ko taku makau e noho ana.*

E tū, i te tū o Hine Rēhia

E haka i te haka o Tāne-rore

Rūrukutia tō Kahumaiwhiti, Rūrurukutia tō Rongomaiwhiti!

My name is Tūhoe Huata. I am currently in my second year, teaching Te Rautoki a Toi, Postgraduate Diploma in Māori Performing Arts at Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangī. It is a role and responsibility that I take seriously and with a passion.

Early Years

I was born in Hamilton and spent most of my early years travelling with my parents and siblings to Rotorua and Wairoa, the places where my parents grew up. Since our parents were quite active in te ao haka, it was only natural for us to go to practices as kids and sing the notes at the top of our lungs. After our father died in 1983, our visits back to Ngāti Kahungunu became minimal. Our mother gave us new experiences and became the pillar of our whānau.

My mother, Ngāmoni, did an excellent job nurturing us. As a widow, she made sure we had everything we needed. How she managed to raise her four children alone during those formative years still astounds me. Te Keepa Marsh and Mauriora Kingi from our Te Arawa side became role models for my brother and me. They would travel backwards and forwards from Rotorua to Hamilton. Later, they would have a profound influence on my life. While our older sister took care of us in Hamilton, my mother returned to Rotorua in 1990 to take care of our grandmother. We missed our mum, so my brother and I packed our Nintendo game, got ourselves a bus ticket, and travelled to our grandmother's house at 66 Sala Street, Rotorua. When we were children, Whakarewarewa, commonly known as "waka" by the locals, was the place to be. Our playground consisted of the famous Puarenga river, ngāwha and geysers. Being



a village kid meant knowing rāanga, whakairo, waiata, and haka. We assumed that everyone had 'steam boxes' or cooked kai in a ngāwha like Parekōhuru. On reflection, we were fortunate to have such resources available to us. Being a village kid, tourism was just another part of everyday life. Visitors or 'Te Hunga Taiea' would come from far and wide to witness our natural treasures. Tourists had been visiting the geysers at Whakarewarewa long before the eruption of Tarawera. Our Guides of Whakarewarewa, 'Kuia Kahurangi', were exceptional educators with a proud legacy that spans back 180 years. They were instrumental in maintaining our oral history of Tūhourangi Ngāti Wāhiao, which is still thriving today. Many of my cousins were naturally highly skilled at 'Ruku Kapa' (penny diving). They could earn anywhere from \$50 to \$80 per day from the river. I used to ask my mother for change and count my coins at the end of the day with everyone else because I wasn't a 'shark' like my brother and cousins.

Early Education

I started to look more into Māori imagery and would spend a lot of time marvelling at the carvings around our marae 'Te Pākira'. I found it difficult at Secondary School. Apart from Te Reo Māori class, the other teachers just allowed me to draw pictures at the back of the class. I told my mum, and she encouraged me to apply for a trainee position at the New Zealand Māori Arts and Crafts Institute. Te Kuru o Te Marama Waaka, Tā Hepi Te Heuheu, John Tahuri, Bob Te Kiri, Mauriora, and my koro Wi Te Tau Huata wrote recommendation letters for me. I was asked to draw an image by Master Carver Clive Fugil during my interview. I recall asking myself, 'What am I going to draw?' Then it came to me, a bulldog! To make a long story short, I became a trainee carver at the age of 15.

Men like Te Keepa Marsh and Mauriora Kingi were already strong role models in my life. They were both carvers and exponents of tikanga Māori. Now, they would become two of my tutors. On my first day at the Institute, Te Keepa called me over and asked, 'Why the hell did you draw a bulldog?' I replied, 'It was the only thing I was good at drawing'. At that point, he made me draw 10 tekoteko (three-dimensional figures). Accompanying Te Keepa and Mauriora to fulfil the needs of the people was a normal excursion. We would jump in 'big blue' and sing along to Dennis Marsh and Tui Tekā. We were all so close in our training days. I attended waiata classes with Uncle Tona Nuri every week in our tupuna whare Wāhiao. We were taught all the old mōteatea of Tūhourangi Ngāti Wāhiao and other mōteatea connected to our people. While carving throughout the week, Te Keepa and Mauriora would spend time with me,

critiquing the way I sang the mōteatea. These mōteatea were often sung at our tangihanga and poroporoaki.

Concert Party Life

Following the carving school, life was entirely self-directed. I carved at home, accepting little projects and commissions. I decided to pause and rekindle my passion for te ao haka. I became a full-time concert entertainer performing nightly at various venues: Pōhutu Concert Group (with Aunty Bubbles and Uncle Tom Roberts), Te Amokura Concert Group (with Aunty Leah Ratana), and Matariki Concert Group (with Aunty Josie Scott and Polly Hepi).

In my view, concerts were powerful training grounds for performers to hone their abilities and skill base. You became adaptable and groomed to perform with excellence to a wide range of audiences. I was so blessed to be surrounded by beautiful singers. I would receive my vocal notes from Wiremu Williams, who would advise me to 'remain on that'. Aunty Leah would offer constructive criticism and pointers. However, I will always be grateful to my mum, Aunty Bubbles, Uncle Tom, and Chad 'The Manga' for starting me on the concert party scene. I travelled extensively overseas with these concert groups, both nationally and internationally. They taught you to be an ambassador for your whānau, hapū, iwi, and Aotearoa. The most incredible experience gained was understanding who you were and sharing our culture with the world.

Te Kapa o Tūhourangi Ngāti Wāhiao

In 1991, I joined Te Kapa o Tūhourangi Ngāti Wāhiao. My mum, Aunty Whakataerangi Heretaunga, Mauriora, Te Keepa, and Davis Te Mara were tutoring the kapa at the time. I only joined the kapa because my mum was there. I enjoyed hanging out with her and the other kuia, like Elsie Rāponi and Te Ao Kapuarangi Murray. I would stay with my mother and her aunts, learning about tikanga and haka, while other people my age went out and enjoyed their parties.

In 1992, I stood at my first national kapa haka competition in Ngāruawāhia. Mauriora and my mother were the leaders. All our items were stories from home about how we connected to Tainui. We also performed a haka that year about Hatupatu and Kurungaituku. There were differing opinions on whether we were performing a haka or more of a whakaari. The comments didn't bother me. We were all whānau on stage, and our kuia at home adored our performance. In 1995, I became a co-tutor



for our kapa and started composing items. I enjoyed creating choreography and actions with some of the boys. Of course, my mum was always there to offer guidance. I appreciated my older cousins, uncles, and aunties. Despite being younger than many of them, I was assigned a significant responsibility as one of the tutors. I held that role until I left for North America in 1998. I had outstanding Iho Pūmanawa in Tūhourangi Ngāti Wāhiao. Patrick Tamati (Pate) would teach all our vocal notes. To make sure you had the note, he would stop the entire group and have you sing it back to him. Mauriora, Rangitihi Pene, and John Turi were exceptional composers. I discovered the importance of preserving our village's distinctive mita and kupu. Te Keepa and Chad Manga made sure that we held fast to the way we used rākau and our haka stance. Michael Rurehe and Hereana Roberts were musical geniuses. My cousins and other whānau members in the kapa were strong, dedicated kaihaka ambassadors for our people. In 1998, I travelled to North America with Kahurangi Māori Dance Theatre. For two years, our troop was based in Niagara Falls, Canada, and Bronx, New York. At that time, we attended several events and performed in over 2,500 schools. I formed connections with other native dancers and dance styles, which ultimately broadened my perspective on arts education. I returned home in 1999, married my wife Mereana, and then moved to Heretaunga in 2000.

Professional Accomplishments:

I became a tohunga whakairo at Mihiroa Marae and facilitated the programme under Te Wānanga Whare Tapere o Takitimu and Massey University. My first intake of students were all older than me and of Ngāti Kahungunu descent. Most of them were senior members of the Hastings and Napier Mongrel Mob. There was never a dull moment with this dynamic group of guys. They were dedicated to the art and completed their three years of training.

While in Hastings, a group of friends approached my whānau and me to help with a senior kapa. The name of that kapa was Te Taawhārangi, which was an open kapa for those who wanted to learn te reo Māori through kapa haka. It was crucial to develop a distinctive look for this kapa. I felt obligated to give back to my Kahungunu whānau, despite having lived my entire life in Tūhourangi Ngāti Wāhiao. In 2002, we successfully qualified and represented Ngāti Kahungunu at the Te Matatini, Takaparawhau. It was a huge accomplishment. I discovered new dimensions of my teaching style. In 2002, I enrolled in the Māori Performing Arts degree at Te Wānanga Whare Tapere o Takitimu, in

partnership with Massey University. In 2005, I completed a Degree in Māori Visual Arts under Sandy Adsett. In 2007, I gained my Teaching Diploma from Victoria University. I then started my teaching career at Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Ngāti Kahungunu ki Heretaunga. In 2016, I graduated from Te Wānanga o Raukawa with a Master's degree in Education. For me, this was a significant turning point. I couldn't stop thinking about how I drew trucks and bulldogs in most of my classes when I was thirteen. I continued teaching and joined various educational sectors. In 2010, I became a member of the NZQA Whakaruruhau. In 2017, I joined the Ngāti Kahungunu Rūnanga Arts and Culture board. In 2021, I joined the development team in creating the Te Ao Haka curriculum. In that same year, I became chairman of Te Kōhanga Reo o Whanake Te Kura and graduated last year with Te Tohu Whakapakari.

Kura

As previously mentioned, I began teaching at Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Ngāti Kahungunu ki Heretaunga in 2007. Visual Arts, Te Reo Māori, and Te Ao Haka have been my subjects. They reflect all I have encountered in my life and are my passion. For the past 18 years, I have co-tutored our wharekura kapa alongside my sister, Maku, my two nieces, Tiahuia and Panache, and my two nephews, Para and Turei. My years of experience in te ao haka have enabled me to contribute to the development of our kapa, as well as mentoring. Both my nieces and nephews have graduated from Awanuiārangi with their Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts (BMPA) degree. Para and Turei were lecturers for Te Pōkaitahi Reo, and Tiahuia is currently one of the lecturers for BMPA.

Whakakapi

Performing alongside family is the pinnacle for me. I believe that our kapa is an extension of our marae, our tūpuna, and pūrākau. In my view, it was our responsibility to maintain our narratives, the dreams and aspirations of our tūpuna. It is something that my mother instilled in me from a very early age. I want to express my gratitude to my mother, Ngāmoni Huata, for everything she has done for me and my siblings. During her most difficult moments, she offered us the best life had to offer. She constantly sacrificed herself for us and her Tūhourangi Ngāti Wāhiao people. She has always been there for us, no matter the circumstances. Her fortitude and tenacity have enabled me to thrive in ways I would never have imagined. You are an inspiration and a multifaceted survivor. Ko koe tonu a nehe, kāore he painga i a koe! E ko koia, nō te hāhā whenua, nō te hihī kōhatu, nō te hū o Tarawera!



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