

Artist Interview

MAURI

Paemanu

Tahi: I guess that's what we talked about before when we talked about the Mauri of the exhibition... that Mauri that's been created from what we bring and what has been done.

Rua: hmm ... Yeah. Does Mauri live in... is it in stories as well?

Toru: You put the Mauri into your artwork. Well that's what I do. When I think about what I create, I put the Mauri in by reliving it I suppose. And telling it.

Rua: So Mauri does live in stories, it doesn't have to be a tangible thing, a physical thing, so Mauri can exist without the physical.

Tahi: I would even posit that Mauri exists sans the physical, that we have the physical to hold the Mauri in. Like Pounamu: well pounamu has its own Mauri and it has energy but we use it to put Mauri in. When we have a tohu maumahara, and the Mauri goes into that goes in there. We put it in.

Rua: Yeah so the Mauri exists without the stone.

Tahi: And we put it in there, its like a trigger really...

Toru: It brings it back to life, its the spark of the life.

Rua: In that sense it evolves doesn't it? It takes on something else... But does Mauri...

Whā: Mauri is there, no matter what. Its a quality. Its a ...

Toru: ...essence...

Whā: Its an essence, its everywhere. So my thinking is that Mauri is not something that we think about, because you can over think it.

Toru: ... Yeah I agree, we do overthink it.

Whā: ... We can over think it and we can over-want-to-do-something about it. But its there! Irrespective! Mauri is something that when you talk to people who don't understand that concept then you start to talk about Mauri, otherwise you don't need to talk about it!

Tahi: That statement you just made we can “over-want-to-do-something about it” I like that! Cos you change the Mauri eh! By over thinking it and not giving it the respect that it should have. You try and turn it into something else.

Whā: Yeah

Rua: Its like that whole idea... who said that Mauri... Um ... that M.D.F. does not have a Mauri.

Toru: if its living...

Tahi: I would say that if it exists it has a Mauri.

Toru: Yeah that's right.

Whā: Have a think about this...if you are thinking about how to provide a tangible example of Mauri. I think about a hand full of this stuff, [holds up a hand] and a handful of this stuff [holds up another hand] and some seeds and I put it all together and combine it and something grows and what makes it grow???

Toru: I think that's what we said too, about bringing it to life, making it grow. But, can something lose its Mauri?

Whā: I don't think so. It might be sleeping.

Tahi: It can be altered.

Whā: I don't see any problem with custom wood having Mauri at all.

Rua: I think that's starting to make sense...but I think sometimes that makes things a little bit too precious

Whā: Yes Yes... that's what I mean by sometimes we can over think it. And we might want something to have Mauri, to be something in particular circumstances. But if we take that concept that Mauri is everywhere, then we can't be selective about where that “Everywhere” is. We have to accept it for what it is, not make the decision based on how we feel on the day or what we want it to be.

Tahi: That whole feeling of want you want your work to portray. I did a carving and I went to North Taranaki, that was where my Kuia was from, and I felt that was me putting Mauri into it because for me that's my ancestors, and their Mauri and that's how I put the Mauri into my mahi.

Tahi: But the Mauri of that tree is still there as well.

Toru: Yeah, but this is the Mauri that I am trying to give my work, is that, these are my people and these are three pou that I did, telling the journey of North Taranaki, central and South Taranaki. but beforehand it had a Mauri. You know! The tree has Mauri, the story has Mauri: both together they have a different Mauri.