

PAEMANU



PAEMANU: NOHOAKA TOI NGĀI TAHU ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE

8 SEPTEMBER 2017 – 26 NOVEMBER 2017

TOI MOROKI; CENTRE OF CONTEMPORARY ART (COCA), CHRISTCHURCH

All photos by Daniela Aebli

Curated by senior Paemanu artists, *Nohoaka Toi* took visitors on a journey of Ngāi Tahu visual expression from rock art to the present day. Site-specific works, large-scale projections and sculptural interventions explored whakapapa (lineage), wairua (spirit), and the vibrancy of contemporary Ngāi Tahu visual arts.

Nohoaka Toi involved some of Aotearoa's most significant artists, including Ross Hemera, Areta Wilkinson, Simon Kaan, Lonnie Hutchinson, Peter Robinson, Neil Pardington, Rachael Rakena, Fayne Robinson, Ranui Ngarimu, Nathan Pohio, Louise Potiki Bryant, Martin Awa Clarke Langdon, Kiri Jarden, and many more established and emerging Ngāi Tahu artists.

The exhibition transformed CoCA into a nohoaka seasonal camp, beginning with the artists occupying the gallery prior to the exhibition opening and continuing throughout. One is warmly welcomed and encouraged to participate.

Paemanu Collective includes

Ross Hemera is an established artist, designer and arts educator who has built a practice that honours and reflects the cultural and artistic traditions of his iwi, whilst incorporating new interpretations. 'The important things are often about the land, our relationship as people with the land'.

Exploring **Areta Wilkinson's** work, whether it is a survey, a series or a single object, is always a journey through her life history, including Ngāi Tahu ancestral stories, and the more profound aspects of human existence. Her jewellery is the embodiment of personal and collective stories.

Art's agency within cultural revival is central to **Simon Kaan's** understanding of his position as an artist. He possesses a refined visual language developed over decades, intrinsically tied to his sense of personal genealogy, being of both Ngāi Tahu and Chinese descent.

Neil Pardington's practice has been described as 'straight photography with a twist'. He works in the space between documentary photography – where the defining principle is to capture the truth about the world – and conceptual photography, which contends that such a truth can never really be depicted.

Nathan Pohio is an artist working in video and other photographic media. He has worked at Christchurch Art Gallery since 2002, holding the position of Exhibition Designer since 2005. Nathan has developed a substantial practice in his field. He has nurtured many projects, both small and large scale, through to completion.

Rachael Rakena is widely respected for her innovative use of digital and electronic media immersed in Māori tradition, culture and values. Her work has prompted a new term, *toi rerehiko* (literally 'electric brain'), which is a play on *rorohiko*, the Māori word for computer. Rakena has exhibited internationally, including works at the Sydney Biennale, Venice Biennale and Busan Biennale.

Jon Tootill's recent work embodies European Abstraction and Modernism, yet is equally engaged with the aesthetics of *kōwhaiwhai* or *koru* forms.

Lonnie Hutchinson is of Ngāti Kuri ki Ngāi Tahu, Samoan and European descent. She was born in Auckland and works in the fields of drawing, sculpture, performance, installation and moving image. Spatial consideration and the formal qualities of materials are primary to her practice.

The name Paemanu is derived from the imagery found in rock paintings throughout Te Waipounamu. Paemanu was chosen as a name because it acknowledges the *whakapapa* (lineage) and *tikanga* (customs and protocols) from which the group draws its creative spirit. Literally, the word translates as 'the perch of the birds'.

The notion of a perch indicates a place where *manu* (birds) find sanctuary and sustenance, or conversely, a platform from which to launch. It is a conceptual place of *whakawhānaungatanga* (connections and relationships), Ngāi Tahutanga, creative discourse, inspiration, innovation, and importantly, art.







