

An aerial photograph of a small, densely forested island in the middle of a vast, clear blue ocean. The island is covered in thick green trees and vegetation. The water around the island is a deep, clear blue. The text 'Ā Muri. Atu In the Future' is overlaid in large, white, sans-serif font across the center of the image.

# Ā Muri. Atu In the Future

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Emiko Sheehan \ Jade Townsend

# To sing to each other across time and space

Hana Pera Aoake

## Te Kore

Time did not exist  
In the beginning there  
was only Te Kore  
Despite the darkness  
and apparent stillness,  
life and it's potentiality bubbled  
Taane and many of his  
siblings grew frustrated  
Their frustration generated a  
single strand of energy, a thread  
As it slowly twitched we began  
to see Te Poo and Ao Marama  
Te Kore is the source of the  
life-force of all things that exist  
in Te Poo and Ao Marama  
Lightness and Darkness  
Growth and decay



Hand-made paper by Zoe Black gifted to Jade between the two rāhui in 2020. Acrylic paint from America. Fishing rope collected from Layan beach in Thailand



'The Kings Mask', sculpture at Ngāruawāhia by Inia Te Wiata junior

## Ruku i te poo

In my dream I am floating along the Waikato awa. I am not wet as I hover gently above the surface of the water. Beneath the water I notice that I'm being shadowed by something long and white. It looks like Te Ikaroa – the great whale that floats through the Milky way – soaring above the northern horizon in August and plummeting into the depths of the South-Western horizon by November.

Maybe it's Pane-iraira guiding me home along my awa; just as they guided the Tainui waka from Hawaiki to Whangaparaoa.

In a notebook, a man named Aporo drew what paakehaa refer to as dreams. But I would argue they were not dreams but visions of the future.

Aporo fought for the Kingiitanga and was killed by a Paakehaa on 23 January 1867, while hiding underneath a waterfall at Poripori.

In it, on one page he drew a reddish cloud and a flock of little manu. One larger manu glides alongside them. They all settled on the cloud. Before Aporo woke up.

Manu are in many ways kaitiaki, whether they are giving you a good or a bad tohu, they are adventurers that skim through the space between Papatuaanuku and Ranginui.

On the following page, Aporo drew a European ship with the inscription:

This is a ship with one mast.  
Its sails are red.

The whole of the sea of  
Tauranga is red like the sails.

Earlier this year in beaches across Otago, red krill stranded themselves turning the ocean red.

My dreams were red.



Emiko's pāpā's fishtank in Kirikiriroa

Putiputi at Ngaruawahia  
Fold out section of 'He Piko Taniwha'  
by Emiko. Kokowai on found paper



## Karanga atu, karanga mai

In her book *An American Sunrise*, Muscogee poet Joy Harjo describes the way the songs travel through generations and are there even when only we can hear them. In the poem, 'A refuge in the smallest of places', Harjo notes:

Someone sang for me when  
no one else could hear it  
Now I am here in the timeless  
room of lost poetry  
Gathering up the destroyed  
and forgotten  
Because of the songs someone  
sang that no one else could hear  
But me.<sup>1</sup>

If you listen very carefully you can hear singing. Think for instance of the way plants sing to us. Or the lichen that grows in between and through the bark on a Koowhai tree. A koowhai tree signalled shelter and water for a weary traveller. All trees tell stories of time and their words are roots, which are porous and slip between past, present and the future. The spores of trees travel hundreds sometimes thousands of kilometers through Taawhirimatea's air. The hau of the tree passing through Taane Mahuta into Hinetiitama. Hands weave the harakeke that grows by the point where the Waipa awa meets the Waikato awa. We see each other, as the tentacles of whakapapa unfurl. We see our old selves not as ghosts or the people we have lost, but as a full totality. Crossing oceans that pull us together. We place our eyebrows

on Tangaroa's shores. We do not yell on his waves. We throw back the first fish of every catch. It's like we are dancing. Our bodies sing to each other. We gather putiputi and karaehe. We put the putiputi in our hair. We swim in the reeves. Tuna passes through our legs. Water carries all memory. "Memory is always moving."<sup>2</sup> Indeed, it moves like water. Water carries stories the way we share knowledge.

<sup>1</sup> Joy Harjo, *An American Sunrise*. Norton Paperback: United States, 2020, 59.

<sup>2</sup> Joy Harjo, *An American Sunrise*, 34.

Cover image  
Waipa awa off the dock  
at Ngāruawāhia

Hand-made paper by Zoe Black gifted  
to Jade between the two rāhui in  
2020. Glass beads and thread.



## Ka mua, ka muri

The double spiral in Takarangi uses space to separate two solid spirals – a yin and a yang. But it is the space between where we are able to see both of the spirals. The centre of the takarangi represents that beginning. The two intersecting spirals are Papatuaanuku and Ranginui forever reaching for each other. The open space between the spirals is Te Ao Marama, and the link humans have to wairua, all things, human and non-human, alive and long deceased.

Takarangi is a double spiral pattern that symbolises this moment in time. Unlike the Cartesian split in western philosophy, the splitting of Ranginui and Papatuaanuku meant creating spaces for new ontologies, rather than strict categories. It meant an intersection. As Māori we are often framed as ‘Other’, but this perhaps gives us an opacity to exist in our own terms. For instance, it’s a process not dissimilar to what Eduard Glissant wrote in *The Poetics of Relation* that “the Other can dwell within me, without making me alter course, without “prizing me open”, without changing me within myself.”<sup>3</sup>

Every generation must consider the dead and thereby acknowledge the past. We walk through the past, as we tell it’s stories that are always mediated by and entwined with our present. We cannot forget that to

begin with, our bodies have been constructed into imperial categories, but “the human and its subcategory, the inhuman, are historically relational to a discourse of settler-colonial rights and the material practices of extraction, which is to say that the categorization of matter is a spatial execution, of place, land...”<sup>4</sup>

We are always finding ways to commune with the whenua, with whaanau and with friends.

I am not Aporo. I cannot see the future, but I refuse to catastrophize the future. I can already move between different spaces, through my body’s wairua, it’s celestial potentiality and connection to all things from the past, present and future.

It moves and it shifts.

It’s as Emily Karaka described in 2002, “Our culture has grown and grown; I don’t believe it’s static. I mean, it is a timeless knowledge, so it belongs in the past, the present, and the future – so it must have the capacity to move.”<sup>5</sup>  
Ka mua, ka muri.

<sup>3</sup> Eduard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*. Besty Wing (trans.) University of Michigan Press: Chicago, 1990, 154.

<sup>4</sup> Kathryn Yusoff, *A Billion Black Anthropocenes or None*. University Of Minnesota: Minneapolis, 2018, 14.

<sup>5</sup> *Taiāwhio: Conversations with Contemporary Māori Artists*. Huhana Smith (ed.), Te Papa Press: Wellington, 2002, 94.