Hinemihi: Te Hokinga – The Return

Hamish Coney and Dr Keri-Anne Wikitera — Lyonel Grant Jim Schuster Mark Adams

Hinemihi: Te Hokinga – The Return

published by Rim Books in conjunction with Two Rooms gallery, November 2020

Hamish Coney author - in conjunction with Mark Adams, with contributions by Dr Keri-Anne Wikitera, Lyonel Grant and Jim Schuster

With funding support from Creative New Zealand.

The journey of the carved house Hinemihi o Te Ao Tawhito (Hinemihi of the old world) is one defined by cataclysmic events and the unpredictability of elemental forces. Through eruptions, fires, wars and displacement she has endured. Today she is a revered kuia, adored by her iwi in the United Kingdom and her original owners and creators, Tūhourangi as well as wider iwi of Te Arawa.

Hinemihi is also an artwork, a taonga of rare beauty whose artist carvers, Tene Waitere and Wero Tāroi, are celebrated in this publication.

Hinemihi o Te Ao Tawhito will soon return to Aotearoa, after over a century standing in the gardens of Clandon Park in Surrey, home of the Onslow family whose ties to New Zealand date to the tenure of the 4th Earl, William Hillier Onslow's tenure as Governor-General in the 1890s.

This publication is also a celebration of one of New Zealand's great photographic artists Mark Adams and marks his recent exhibition Hinemihi: Te Hokinga – The Return at Two Rooms Gallery in July and August, 2020

Hinemihi: Te Hokinga – The Return also features numerous unpublished historic images sourced from private collections and New Zealand Museums.

The preparation of the publication has taken place in close consultation with Ngā Kohinga Whakairo – the Rotorua based organization which represents Hinemihi's ancestral iwi Tūhourangi, Ngāti Hinemihi and Ngāti Tarawhai.

www.rimbooks.com

Folding flaps cover, 310 x 233mm (portrait) 128 pages with folding sections

ISBN: 978-0-9951184-4-7, $60 retail

Publishing date: 7 December 2020

For further information contact:
Haru Sameshima haru@rimbooks.com 0211705171

Burton Brothers
Rununga House (Hinemihi), Wairoa
albumen print, circa 1885
private collection

In this image the Tūhourangi chief Āporo Te Wharekāniwha can be seen centre left, raising a kotiate parāoa (whalebone) in his right hand.

Rangatira Mahi

Hinemihi o Te Ao Tawhito (Hinemihi of the Old World) is never far from the headlines… was the thought that came to me as I perused the *New Zealand Herald*'s September (2020) *Viva* magazine. There amongst the Gucci ads and an earnest discussion on whether 80s fashion was (finally) ready for a reappraisal was Mark Adams' photograph of Hinemihi in all her glory at Clandon Park, an image I, and many others, had recently encountered at full scale in the exhibition *Hinemihi: Te Hokinga—The Return* at Two Rooms in Auckland.

Just the day before, I had been scanning a newspaper clipping dated 1 March 1886 from the *Daily Telegraph*'s roving reporter Augustus Sala, with the heading 'The Hot Lakes: The Wonders of Rotomahana,' in which he recounts his visit to Te Wairoa, his encounter with Guide Sophia, her "demeanor of a duchess… she is alert and lithe and keen of purview," as well as a night spent in the 'temple' witnessing the 'corps de ballet' performing a "'haka,' as handed down to them from their remote ancestors."

That 'temple' was Hinemihi o Te Ao Tawhito. Sala was quick to note that most carved houses "have eyes of iridescent mutton-fish shells; whereas the eyes of the grinning horrors of Wairoa have eye-balls of shillings, sixpences, and three penny bits. I was even told that some of these simulated organs of vision were sovereigns and half-sovereigns."

Sala's report continues the next day with a visit to the Pink and White Terraces and his fascination with the plentiful koura available to the tourists of the day, "a kind of crawfish…. The freshwater crustacean of Lake Tarawera intimately resembles the *écrevisse*, which makes so frequent an appearance on the table in France."

After a luncheon break Sala and his companions continue their tour to Rotomahana and the 'silicate' terraces of Te Otukapuarangi and Te Tarata, where he happens upon what must have been a common sight at that time, an intrepid photographer at work capturing the 'eighth wonder of the world' for a growing international audience. "We found a well-known photographer of Auckland, Mr. Josiah Martin, camping out on the shore of Rotomahana, opposite the White Terrace. An address, it struck me, at once genteel and romantic. At Rome how often have I envied the occupants—whosoever they might be—of 'Number Five, Appian Way,' and 'Number Nineteen, Forum of Trajan'! But now that I have seen the marvels of Hotwaterland I really think that the most picturesque address that one could give would be 'The Tent, opposite the White Terrace, Lake Rotomahana, N.Z.'"

Pākehā tourists struggling to find a frame of reference from the 'old' world to adequately describe the splendours of Godzone is a familiar theme in nineteenth century reporting from Aotearoa. W. P. Snow and the travel writer Talbot Thorpe's account in *The New Guide to the Lakes and Hot Springs and A Month in Hot Water* (1882) makes for wonderful reading, with numerous florid passages such as this by Snow: "If any human architect could create so perfectly a thing as the White Terrace, it would be irreverent to stand in his presence with one's hat on. The glory of the vision filled one with a religious feeling that forty thousand religious meetings would have failed to awaken."

The Rotorua district at the time was developing into a beacon of tourism as visitors arrived in increasing numbers to take in the numerous sights, the terraces being the star attraction, or bathe in the therapeutic hot springs at Ōhinemutu and Whakarewarewa. Publications of the period go to great lengths to chronicle the healing properties of the potassium, sulphates various, potash, iron oxides and other trace elements to be found in the soothing pools of 'Hotwaterland.'

In the early 1880s the population of Aotearoa was growing at a rapid rate; the 1881 census records the colony as containing 500,000 residents, almost double the population of ten years prior. Dunedin was New Zealand's largest city with 24,000 residents, Wellington was not far behind with 20,000. Auckland and Christchurch boasted populations of about 16,000 each. However, the early 1880s saw the Māori population become static or go into decline regionally as the effects of colonisation—land alienation, resource deprivation, displacement due to conflict, and the sundry ailments and viruses that came with European arrivals—began to take an increasing toll. On the night of the eruption of Mt Tarawera the population of Te Wairoa was estimated at about two hundred and fifty.

Over one hundred and fifty people died at Te Wairoa on the evening of 10 June 1886. The number of fatalities could have been much highter were it not for the sturdy construction of

Robert Henry Bartlett
Tangata Whenua on the Pink Terraces
albumen silver print, 1871 (detail)
private collection

July 24, 2020. A welcome whakatau at Two Rooms Gallery, Auckland for the opening of the Mark Adams exhibition, *Hinemihi: Te Hokinga –The Return*. A delegation from Ngāti Whatua o Orakei welcome guests from Tūhourangi, Ngāti Hinemihi and Ngāti Tarawhai including descendants of Āporo Te Wharekāniwha and representatives of Ngā Kohinga Whakairo o Hinemihi.
Photographs Sam Hartnett

The Embrace of a Matriarch

Dr Keri-Anne Wikitera

Dr Keri-Anne Wikitera (Tūhourangi) is a Lecturer at Auckland University of Technology. She has published extensively on Kaupapa Māori research in the area of cultural identity, with a particular focus on Māori economic development and indigenous tourism. Dr Wikitera's doctoral thesis *Māori Spaces in Foreign Places: Hinemihi o Te Ao Tawhito* (2015) communicates her unique research-based perspective informed by her family connection as mana whenua. Her tūpuna were resident at Te Wairoa at the time of the eruption of Mount Tarawera in 1886.

The exhibition *Hinemihi: Te Hokinga—The Return* is yet another example of the way Hinemihi o Te Ao Tawhito continues to connect her whakapapa whānau with her many different communities around the world. Although she has been in England for a hundred and thirty years, her mauri, her wairua, continues to bring people together, in many serendipitous ways. The absence of her physical presence does not diminish the power of her spirit as she continues to embody the attributes of a matriarch presiding over her whānau.

The suite of photographs *Te Hokinga*, the relationships created and the kōrero shared adds another layer to her story. Through the technology and talent of those that bought the exhibition to fruition, Hinemihi o Te Ao Tawhito again finds a home in the hearts and minds of her descendants, as well as those who have crossed her path. These connections further strengthen the kaupapa of having her whakairo return to her people, Ngāti Hinemihi.

Hinemihi, understood to be a great chieftainess who lived in the Rotorua region circa the sixteenth century, was an extraordinary woman. As a revered ancestress she was immortalised by Chief Āporo Te Wharekāniwha in 1881, when he named his newly built whare after her. It was an unusual choice for a whare to be named after a woman.

Regarding Hinemihi herself, her mana and fame were inherited through those chiefly lines but appear to be also strongly associated with her relationship with a guardian named Kataore.Kataore is said to have been a kaitiaki of the Okataina region. This guardian was greatly feared by many as a taniwha that would devour people travelling through the region, but to others he was respected as being a tohunga who was endowed with spiritual expertise. It is said that he had a soft spot for Hinemihi, and that he would sit and talk with her when others were too afraid of him. Kataore is represented as a taniwha on the poutokomanawa in the whare. (see page 105)

At the time the whare was built in the village of Te Wairoa, the first tourists were arriving on the shores of Aotearoa and were travelling to what was then regarded as the eighth wonder of the world, the Pink and White Terraces. The tourism industry was encouraging development of the region; visitors were coming for the natural geothermal wonders and displayed an increasing interest in the cultural experience on offer at Te Wairoa.

The whare was used for traditional purposes by Ngāti Hinemihi, and also as a facility where cultural performances were held for tourists. Accommodation facilities had also been built and improvements, such as better access to the lakes, had commenced. Chief Āporo Te Wharekāniwha owned a hotel, the Cascade, constructed in 1876, and tourism development quickly became a central part of the local economy.

On 10 June 1886, just five years after the whare opened, Mount Tarawera erupted, devastating the entire region and destroying the Pink and White Terraces. Te Wairoa was covered in volcanic mud and the buildings in the village were mostly destroyed. Not only had the communities suffered huge loss of life but their homes and the local economy were also destroyed. Two buildings that survived the eruption without collapsing were the famed Guide Sophia's house and the whare, Hinemihi. This tragedy initiated the beginnings of her journey to England and the connection to many communities outside of her whānau in Aotearoa.

In 1892 Governor General Lord Onslow's tenure was coming to an end and he was keen to return to England with souvenirs from Aotearoa as reminders of his and his family's stay. His preferred options included a Māori waka for his lake, or a large carved figure or Māori meeting house.

Alfred H. Burton for the Burton Brothers
Āporo and Ngareta at Wairoa
gelatin dryplate negative, circa 1885
Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa C.018394

Wero Tāroi

Ko te tohunga tēnei o Te Arawa katoa[1]

Biographical information relating to Wero Tāroi (b.ca. 1810—d.ca. 1880) is notable for its scarcity, but he is not a complete enigma. We know of Wero as legend, such that over half a century after his death he was described in the quote above as the "carving expert of all Te Arawa." Wero the person is almost impossible to know, but Wero the artist is a bold innovator whose protean creativity was both the kākano (seed) and the puāwai (flower) of a rich new chapter within one of the grand artistic traditions of Aotearoa. Wero's carving whakapapa, via his master Te Amo a Tai and his own father Mahikore, reaches into the pre-contact era and the use of stone carving tools. The arrival of Europeans in the early decades of the nineteenth century and the subsequent availability of metal chisels invigorated Ngāti Tarawhai carvers, and they quickly explored the expressive possibilities of this new technology. Wero took full advantage. His signature carving is defined by high relief, dramatic volume and shadow-play, deep cuts and explosive figure-on-figure scenes—complemented by decorative passages of elegance and complex detail.

Wero also reveals himself as a keen observer of fashion and changing modes of adornment inspired by European dress. He is one of the first artists to identify the symbolic power of European kākahu within the context of whakairo. These interventions communicate the changing reality of Aotearoa via a form of carved reportage. Wero's figures sport boots, top hats or, in the case of the tekoteko atop Hinemihi, what appears to be a jaunty bowler hat.

Jim Schuster[2] notes that Wero passed away during the carving of Hinemihi; the final work was completed by his student and fellow carver, Tene Waitere. Schuster credits Waitere's later innovation to the model set by Wero, whose wry observations provided both precedent and permission for the adoption of European modes of presentation. The confident breadth of the Māori tradition in the hands of a change-agent such as Wero allowed for these stylistic developments in the 1860s, almost a century before Gordon Walters sought to reconcile European modernism and Māori imagery via his koru works. A visit to a Wero-carved whare whakairo such as Houmaitawhiti crackles with the frisson of that first-mover status.

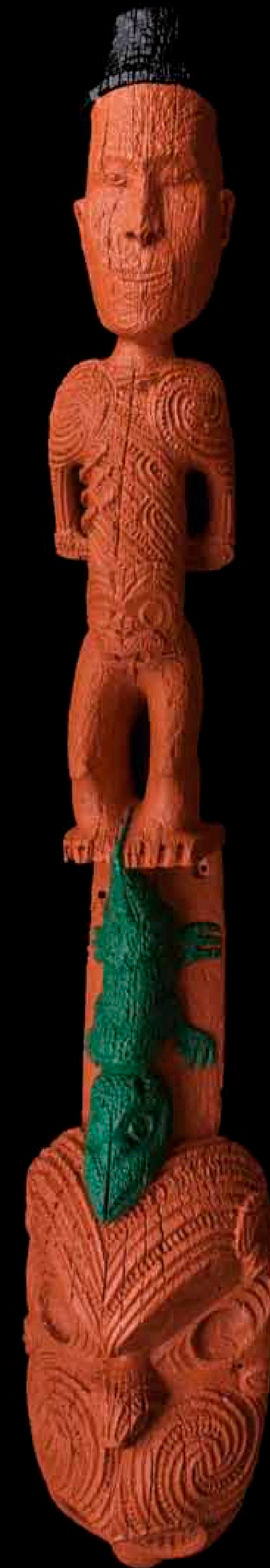
In 2020, getting to know an artist almost solely by studying his work is something of an anachronism, and a relief. Today, the documentation of an artist's career can be supported with a depth of scholarship and the accounts of personal friends, critical writings and the anecdotes of fellow travellers. In the case of the Ngāti Tarawhai school of carving this information began to be gathered within a few years of Wero's death. As a consequence, detailed information and photographs exist for the mahi and the likenesses of Anaha Te Rahui, Tene Waitere and Neke Kapua— his immediate peer group and students, those that Wero taught or carved alongside.

Anaha's portrait was painted by Charles Goldie in 1909, and at the time of writing, is on exhibition at Te Papa Tongarewa as part of *Ngā tai whakarongorua | Encounters in Toi Art*. Amongst the frieze of historic portraits hangs a lone example of whakairo, an exquisite carved mirror by Tene Waitere.

In *Carved Histories*, Roger Neich credits Wero as the originator of the Okataina school, and identifies him as a significant or lead carver of a corpus of houses, gateways and pātaka created between 1840 and 1880 that leads to the conclusion that Wero was a Tohunga Whakairo of the first rank. It is a sustained body of achievement that stands comparison with any artist from any era in any location.

The roll call of Wero's carved mahi toi includes the gateway Te Rangitakaroro circa 1820—1840 (Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira collection); the whare tūpuna Rangitihi (1868—1872, elements of which are in the Auckland War Memorial Museum collection); the pātaka Te Puāwai o Te Arawa (1868, Auckland War Memorial Museum collection); Uenuku mai Rarotonga (1871, Te Punawhakareia Marae, Lake Rotoiti); Houmaitawhiti (1875, Pounamunui Marae, Otaramarae, Lake Rotoiti); Te Tiki a Tamamutu (late 1870s—1881, Spa Hotel, Taupo); and his final carved house, Hinemihi o Te Ao Tawhito (1881, Te Wairoa and Clandon Park).

Wero was a pivotal figure within a centuries-old whakapapa of whakairo, so one measure of his legacy is how he is viewed by the current generation of carvers, among whom is the Ngāti Pikiao carver artist Lyonel Grant, himself the creator of major whare whakairo such as Ngākau Māhaki, which stands on Te Noho Kotahitanga Marae at Unitec in Auckland. Grant gives a considered reply when reflecting on his relationship with Wero. "When I am functioning as a customary carver producing works that have a heavy traditional appearance, I am continually reminded of the legacy or shadow cast by such illustrious artists as Te Wero Tāroi. This is not always an easy place to dwell. After giving your all to a large piece of tōtara in order to fashion it into



The tekoteko from Houmaitawhiti, carved by Wero Tāroi, circa 1875
Photograph by the Rotorua Museum, Te Whare Taonga o Te Arawa
The author thanks Heeni and Te Ariki Morehu of Pounamunui Marae, Otaramarae for their permission to reproduce this image

'The pare of Houmaitawhiti will always be my all-time favourite pare'[1]

Houmaitawhiti is a celebrated Te Arawa ancestor, whose place within tribal lines of descent as the father of Tamatekapua and direct bloodline to their ancient homeland of Hawaiki ensure his name will always be revered.

Following this logic, it is a given that any carved house that carries the name of Houmaitawhiti will embody the mana, the history and the whakapapa of Te Arawa. A journey to the whare tūpuna Houmaitawhiti on Pounamunui Marae at Otaramarae on the northern shores of Lake Rotoiti involves navigating one of the great concentrations of carved houses in Aotearoa. These ancestral houses embody the whakapapa of Ngāti Pikiao, who are mana whenua within the rohe that includes the lakes east of Rotorua (Rotoiti, Rotoehu and Rotoma) and then north towards the coast and Maketū. This large rōpū of whare whakairo articulates the longstanding influence of the Ngāti Tarawhai carving school and the Tohunga Whakairo Wero Tāroi.

Around Lake Rotoiti, from Uruika to the east and Te Takinga[2] to the west, stands over two hundred years of carving tradition, the earliest example of which, a stone-tool carved poupou figure within Houmaitawhiti, dates to the early 1800s. Forming a necklace adorning the shores of Lake Rotoiti, more than ten magnificent carved houses illuminate one of the great artistic traditions of Aotearoa. The houses are named for central ancestor figures within Te Arawa whakapapa: Rangitihi, Te Takinga, Uenuku mai Rarotonga, Tarawhai, Te Rangiunuora, Rākeiao and Pikiao. The whare Ngā Pumanawa e Waru o Te Arawa at Ruato speaks to this region as being held within the descent line of the tupuna Rangitihi.

The two earliest houses are also supreme examples from one of the creators of Hinemihi o Te Ao Tawhito, Wero Tāroi. Uenuku mai Rarotonga (1871) and Houmaitawhiti (1875) are the tungāne or brother houses to their sister Hinemihi o Te Ao Tawhito (1881). As a grouping together with those other carved whare and pātaka on Maketū Hill by Wero, they constitute a body of work whose influence is as significant as that of any artist in New Zealand history. In the hands of Wero's immediate peers and successors, Tene Waitere, Anaha Te Rahui and Neke Kapua, the Ngāti Tarawhai tradition flowered exponentially. In the early twentieth century successors such as Eramiha Kapua expanded this influence via the Rotorua Carving School at Te Ao Marama. The resurgence of whakairo from the mid-twentieth century in the hands of Pine and Hone Taiapa, Pakariki Harrison, Cliff Whiting and, in the twenty-first century, the collected works of Lyonel Grant, all stand within an artistic whakapapa that connects to Wero Tāroi.

The Houmaitawhiti we encounter today has been the subject of a number of upgrades and amendments over the last one hundred and forty-odd years. The original tekoteko and the pair of striking maihi, with their signature rhythmic rauru spirals describing the bodies of the powerful manaia figures (see page 46, top left), are now in the care of the Rotorua Museum Te Whare Taonga o Te Arawa. Houmaitawhiti is, however, largely intact, containing all of the interior poupou and various other carved elements depicted in the 1930s suite of photographs by James Chapman-Taylor. For the student of whakairo who wishes to understand one of the great technical developments of the art, the transition from stone to metal carving tools, Houmaitawhiti provides the most instructive example I have ever seen. Two interior poupou figures stand side by side: one is by the Ngāti Pikiao carver Puwhakaoho[3] and the adjacent figure, with its dramatic high relief and bold, volumetric figure work, is carved with metal tools by Wero at his most expressive. The sense that one is standing in the presence of both history and greatness in the same breath, across a span of fifty years, within the same house, is a potent reminder of the enduring nature of wehi, or awe, that sits at the heart of Māori conceptions of the communicative role of whakairo.

Houmaitawhiti represents Wero at his most assured, at the height of his powers. His signature is his ability to combine impossibly deep-cut figure-on-figure work with complex and elegant design schemes of paua shell inlay within his interior poupou figures. This sense is drama extends to the innovative koruru head figures on the maihi and striking ngutata profile heads to the upper sections of the amo of the exterior façade.

Almost a century and a half after its creation, its movement to and from Maketū Hill and subsequent restorations, Houmaitawhiti is a dynamic embodiment of a ranking Te Arawa tūpuna and a masterpiece of whakairo by one of the greatest exponents of the form.

In correspondence, Lyonel Grant expanded on his admiration for the whakairo of Houmaitawhiti. "The pare kūaha that adorns Houmaitawhiti is, in my view, an exceptional piece of work. I have always assumed that it is the work of Te Wero Tāroi. However, given the fact that Tu Te Rangiwhakaea, Pita Te Wharetoroa, Puwhakaoho[4] and other accomplished carvers are implicated in this house, I can only assume that if it was not Te Wero responsible and he had abdicated this task to someone senior, then at least it could have come out of the continuum that had influenced him.

"In my own experience, I have personally reserved and

James Chapman-Taylor
Houmaitawhiti entrance depicting pare and whakawae by Wero
gelatin silver negative, circa 1934
Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa A.014575

The date of these images is confirmed as 1934 as described in W. J. Phillips, Carved Houses of Te Arawa, vol. 1, no.s 1 & 2 (Wellington, New Zealand: Dominion Museum Records in Ethnology, 1946/8), 39.

She's had the Biggest Trip!

An interview with Jim Schuster

Hinemihi o Te Ao Tawhito's journey from the devastated whenua at Te Wairoa has also been a family haerenga. Within Jim Schuster's family, from his great-great-grandfather the Ngāti Tarawhai Tohunga Whakairo Tene Waitere to his great-aunt Guide Rangi and on to his mother, the legend of Hinemihi has been an almost daily presence. Since the mid 1980s Jim's connection has been as a descendant, a conservator and a lobbyist, both in England and Aotearoa, for his kuia's return.

In June 2020 Mark Adams and Hamish Coney visited Jim and his wife Cathy at their home at Ruato, a short distance from the shores of Lake Rotoiti, where his tupuna Tene Waitere first picked up a chisel.

Hamish Coney: Tell us about the maintenance of the rākau within the ngahere? The role of Ngāti Tarawhai in this area in ensuring that there is a resource for carvers over time?

Jim Schuster: We are living here at the end of Okataina Road. The road goes up through here [points behind house] and towards the lake, which is a dead end. All the way through the native bush here there are some very big trees—kahikatea, rimu, pukatea, tōtara… all sorts. But not very many tōtara anymore. That's because the Tarawhai carvers of the time have almost used them all up. But there are young tōtara coming through, especially around Te Koutu, the old pā site on the lake, there is an old tōtara… she is like a nursery tree. She is not a long straight tree, but a wide one. She drops a lot of seed and there are a lot of seedlings growing around the base. Many of those have been collected, mainly by DOC, and transplanted around the bush. On many of the tracks through the Okataina ngahere you can see a lot of the young tōtara that have been planted. But they are not going to be ready for carvers to use for another eighty years at least. The longer you leave them to grow the taller they'll get. But compared to the kahikatea and the rimu up here, which are thirty to forty metres high at least, those tōtara have a long way to go.

HC: So tōtara is the carving wood of choice? If we go back to Wero and Tene's day was there a controlled area where the trees were harvested?

JS: Yes, and they took [the trees] from this area. Before they were carvers of meeting houses, Ngāti Tarawhai were carvers of canoes, of waka. Big waka. They would carve these waka for other tribes. They carved wharenui for other tribes as well. They used their own tōtara in their own back yard. They weren't supplied by Waikato for those meeting houses, or those down in Hastings. Some of those meeting houses still exist today. So it didn't take long for the rākau to be used up. They didn't just use the tōtara for houses in the Te Arawa area. The tōtara trees were going out and around the motu. In return the carvers would be paid for their work in whatever form it was. I know Tene and Wero did a lot of carving, some of it was for money, some of it was for cows. A lot of this kōrero that I am giving to you, a lot of it came to me from my grandmother and my great-aunt. They looked after Tene. They were his granddaughters. He only ever had one daughter. It was his granddaughters who looked after him in his last days. They were very close to him. When I was growing up they were my great-aunt and grandmother, and they told me these things. So I was getting a granddaughters' view of their grandfather. What I am telling you is the story from their eyes. What he meant to them, and they have passed it on to me. They said, "Well he came back with a cow one time. Another time he came back with a case of whiskey." That was how it was. Sometimes he got paid money, but not very much in those days when he was carving.

Jim Schuster in the interior of his family whare Hinemihi (1928) carved by his great-great-grandfather Tene Waitere. In the photographs behind him are, his mother Emily Schuster OBE QSM, to the left, and his great-aunt Guide Rangi. Photograph by Hamish Coney, January 2019

Photographer Unknown
A Large Group at Hinemihi
albumen silver print, circa 1881
collection of Michael Graham-Stewart

This photograph is among the earliest known of Hinemihi, depicting the nearly completed house whilst the polychrome paint scheme is still in the process of being applied. The group is clearly hamming it up for the camera. For a little humour see the figure at bottom left posing with a European drill.

Elizabeth Pulman
Māori Group in front of Hinemihi, Wairoa
gelatin dryplate negative, circa 1885
Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa C.000411

Elizabeth Pulman
Māori House, Hinemihi, before Tarawera Eruption
image circa 1885, gelatin silver print (1984) from original glass plate negative held in the Rotorua Museum Te Whare Taonga o Te Arawa

Josiah Martin
Carved House (Hinemihi), Wairoa
albumen silver print, circa 1885
private collection

These two photographs include some of the important figures at Te Wairoa in the 1880s. In both images what appears to be the Tohunga Ahurewa Tūhoto Ariki can be seen. (Figure with large striped blanket, centre in the Pulman photograph and inside the roro to the right in the J. Martin image.)

The Canon starts with the Kaitāia Lintel

An interview with Mark Adams

On the eve of the opening of the exhibition *Hinemihi:Te Hokinga—The Return* the artist Mark Adams spoke to Hamish Coney about his long association with the carved whare, his time in Rotorua and the broader political and colonial issues that have informed his practice since the early 1970s.

Hamish Coney: The exhibition at Two Rooms, this Hinemihi suite of works, began as part of the larger *Rauru*[1] project, which resulted in the 2009 publication. Can you describe the beginnings of the *Rauru* concept and how it flowered into a global project?

Mark Adams: I had been working in Rotorua since 1979. In about 1998 I took Nick Thomas[2] down to Rotorua as part of our ongoing "What are we going to do next?" conversation. Nick and I had worked together on previous projects such as *Cook's Sites.*[3] At that point Nick was at the University of London. He'd gone there from the Australian National University in Canberra. It was his idea to expand on the interest I'd had with the Tarawhai carvers after I'd read Roger Neich's master's thesis,[4] which turned into *Carved Histories.*[5] From there I became very interested in Tene Waitere. I also became aware of the carvers around Tene: Wero and Te Amo a Tai, Anaha Te Rahui and Neke Kapua as well. But it was Nick's idea to focus on what happened to Hinemihi and how she travelled over to England, what happened to Rauru and how it travelled over to Hamburg, and what happened to Te Tiki a Tamamutu, which started life by the Waikato River and then got moved to the Spa Hotel site in Taupo.

So *Rauru* was about the cross-cultural situation of these places. That was the focus of our interest. So we decided to dig up the money from grants and go and visit Hinemihi and Rauru. Nick was already in sympathy with my practice and the use of the big plate camera. So we headed off to Hamburg. That's not entirely correct. It took about a year of me writing letters to the Hamburg Museum, backwards and forwards, to convince them that we didn't want them to give us their photos but that we wanted me to go in there and take specialised photographs that were going to do what we wanted them to do [laughs]. But they got the message and after that they were incredibly helpful.

HC: One of the things that is interesting when you talk about the interplay between yourself and the Hamburg Museum is the difference between a photographer wanting to document something to say "this is what it looks like" as opposed to what your work is doing, which is to open up what an artwork, in this instance a 19th century carving, communicates today and the differences between what it spoke to when it was created and how it speaks to us today. This must have been a very interesting process for you from your early days in Rotorua when you first came into contact with that carving practice where, between Pākehā and Māori, there was this fertile dialogue going right back to the 1860s and earlier. Talk to us about these first experiences in Rotorua and the moment when the lightbulb went on and you said to yourself, "Hey there is something really interesting going on here. I need to explore it."

MA: The reason I went to Rotorua is because John Perry[6] got the job as director of the art gallery there. I'd met John a few months before, in 1979, up at Tony Fomison's place. I had some photos with me I'd taken of George Brown, Hori Parāone's carving. George lived out in Clevedon in what had been a dairy farm. The place was full of his carvings. Alan Taylor[7] had taken me there in '78 to meet George. Alan's take on it then was that they were Māori folk art. I don't quite swallow that. I'm not sure about the folk art thing, but I thought George's work was amazing. It was completely personal and funky as hell; it wasn't professional like Rotorua carving. I showed John these photos so he got me down to Rotorua because he wanted to do a photographic show on local carving that was not mainstream. There is a lot of other stuff in Rotorua, especially in Whaka[rewarewa] and on the streets. So that's the reason I went down there. I had been working on this sort of thing from the end of '77 and into early '78 when I started photographing Paul Sulu'ape II[8] and Sāmoan tattooing.

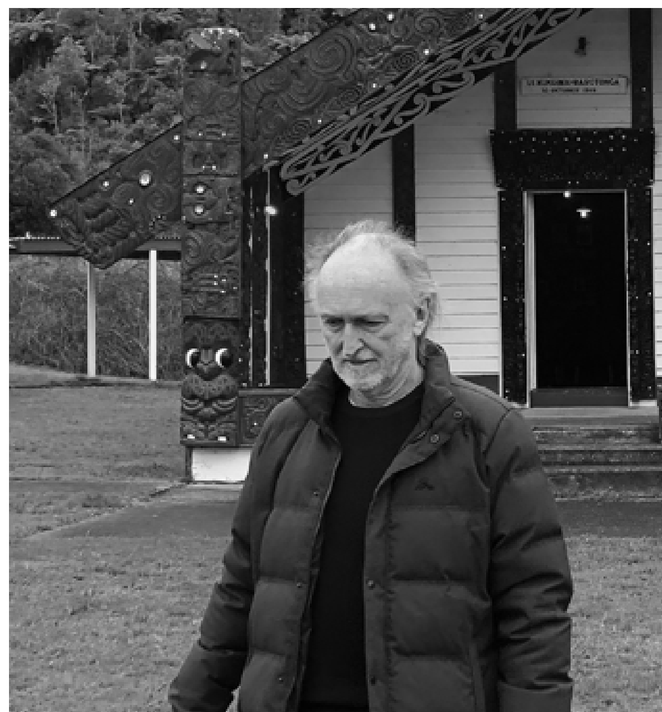
Mark Adams
Door, Rauru, Kurangaituku, the bird-woman. Museum für Völkerkunde, Hamburg. Te Tohunga: Tene Waitere. 9.5. 2002.
C-type silver-based colour photograph enlarged from a 10 x 8-inch Kodak Portra T100 negative

13.11.2000. Hinemihi, Clandon Park, Surrey. England. Nga Tohunga Wero Tāroi, Tene Waitere.

11.11.2000. The Onslow Room, Clandon Park, Surrey. England.

Contributors

Mark Adams (Born 1949. Christchurch. Ka Pakihi Whakatekateka o Waitaha. Canterbury. Te Wai Pounamu. The South Island.)



North New Brighton had a tsunami in 1960, and 54 of us terrified kids and our teacher Mr Ashley were locked into our classroom waiting for it to hit. We went to Canterbury Museum and Mr Eyles showed us the tūpāpaku from Wairau Bar in a display case. I watched Inia Te Waiata carving a waka in the gallery below. I got 4 out of 100 for maths in the fourth form at Shirley Boys' High School in 1963. I got 93 out of 100 for art for School Certificate. My art teacher was Digby Graham. He sent me to art school, where I studied from 1967 to 1970. Doris Lusk taught me painting, Eileen Mayo drawing. Tom Taylor sculpture and Don Peebles basic design. I did the graphic design diploma. No fine art degrees then. I decided I wanted to do photography. Tom Palaskas, a kindly fellow student, taught me how to process film and make prints. I found the school's Linhoff 4 × 5-inch plate camera no one used and used it. That was the future.

The future was a purist large-format-camera-based analogue practice. The works are very high resolution, silver-based enlargements from 8 × 10-inch negatives, black-and-white and colour, and up to mural scale. These works come out of readings and direct experience of world and regional Polynesian and New Zealand art, literature and histories, with focus on regional cross-cultural and colonial issues in New Zealand. I have published several books and catalogues that accompany exhibitions, some in collaboration with academics, historians and other artists. I began exhibiting in 1972 and have shown in most New Zealand public art galleries, many of which have collections of my work. I have also exhibited in public and university galleries and museums internationally.

This has included the 1998 São Paulo Biennale, Zelda Cheatle Gallery, London, the Maritime Museum, Greenwich, the Royal Academy, London, and Musée du quai Branly, Paris. I have benefitted from grants from Queen Elisabeth II Arts Council, MASPAC, CNZ, The Leverhulme Trust and the Getty Grant Program.

I worked at and exhibited with Real Pictures Gallery and photographic laboratory, Auckland. I established Studio La Gonda, Karangahape Road, Auckland, with Haru Sameshima in 1996, and continue to work from there. I am represented by McNamara Gallery Photography and Two Rooms.

Hamish Coney

Hamish is an Auckland-based writer and arts advisor. He has a regular column on the visual arts at newsroom.co.nz. He has also contributed articles to *Art News New Zealand*, *Urbis*, *The New Zealand Herald*, *Idealog* and *Architecture New Zealand*, and was named arts columnist of 2009 at the Qantas Media Awards. From 2007 to 2018 he was the founding Managing Director of the auction house Art + Object. Hamish has a particular interest in the intersection of cross-cultural thinking in the arts, with a view towards placing Māori art concepts and production at the centre of the broader discourse within New Zealand art history. In late 2019 and early 2020 he chaired the presentation of speakers at City Gallery Wellington, and Te Uru Waitakere Contemporary Gallery, Titirangi, for the opening of the exhibition *Split Level View Finder: Theo Schoon and New Zealand Art*. He is a trustee of Artspace Aotearoa and the registered charities The Kauri Project and For the Love of Bees.

Lyonel Grant (Ngāti Te Takinga, Ngāti Pikiao, Ngāti Rangiwewehi, Ngāti Rangitihi, Te Arawa)

An honors graduate from the New Zealand Māori Arts and Crafts Institute (Te Puia) in Rotorua, Lyonel trained under Tohunga Whakairo John Taiapa. In 1985 he carved the meeting house Matapihi o te Rangi, in Tokoroa, which was then followed by Ihenga, at Tangatarua Marae at the Waiariki (now Toi Ohomai) Institute of Technology in Rotorua, from 1993 to 1996. He then completed his third whare, Ngākau Māhaki, in 2009, which stands at Unitec Institute of Technology Te Whare Wānanga o Wairaka, Auckland.

In 2013 he was commissioned to create his fourth house, Paimarire, for a college in Washington State. In honour of the tangata whenua of that land, he blended both Māori and Salish design. Since embarking on a freelance career, his work has become more diverse, exploring the tensions between customary cultural art in the context of the marae (gathering place) and contemporary art styles in the gallery environment as well as international contexts. His focus is the relationship between modernism and classical Māori art, and the utilisation of different materials, modern technologies and influences. Lyonel's work is widely represented in public and private collections in New Zealand and internationally.

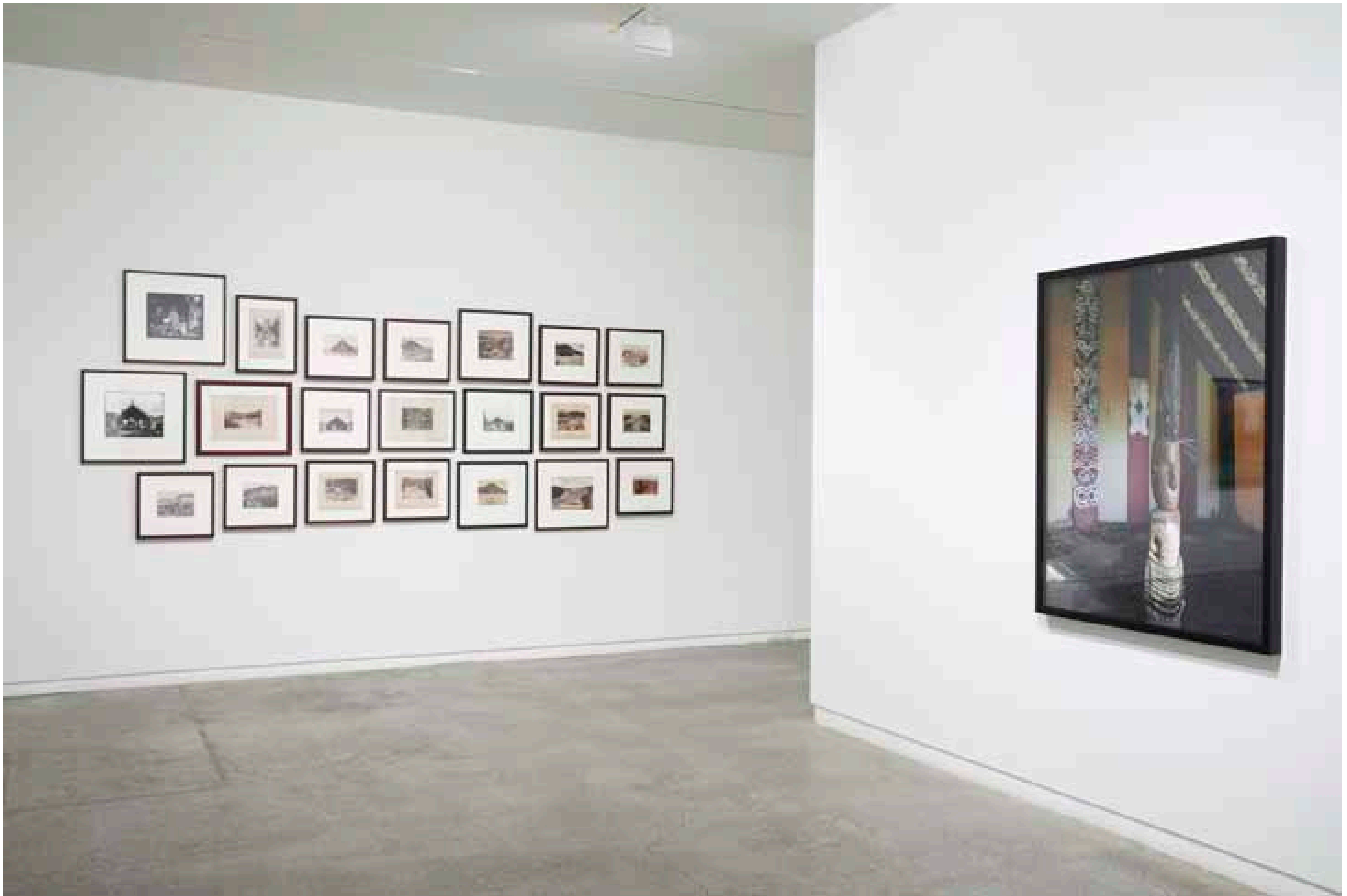
Photograph by Davina Monds

James Schuster (Ngāti Pikiao, Tūhourangi, Ngāti Tarawhai, Tūwharetoa)

James was born and raised in Rotorua, New Zealand, into a family that has practised and maintained Māori arts and crafts for generations. Traditional knowledge and skills have been passed down through the family, which has led to his current position as Maori Built Heritage Advisor, Traditional Arts, with Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga.

Dr Keri-Anne Wikitera (Tūhourangi)

Dr Keri-Anne Wikitera is a senior lecturer and researcher working in the School of Hospitality and Tourism at Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand. Her Māori tribal affiliations are Tūhourangi Ngāti Wahaio and Ngāti Whakaue of Te Arawa, from the geothermal Rotorua region. These tribes are recognised among the nation's principal drivers of Māori tourism. As such, her personal and academic interests are specifically positioned to promote and enhance Māori cultural identity, intercultural exchange, the tourism industry, indigenous history and knowledge systems.



Hinemihi: Te Hokinga—The Return
Two Rooms, Auckland, 24 July to 26 August 2020
photograph by Sam Hartnett

In addition to Marks Adams' suite of Hinemihi photographs the exhibition also featured photographs by Robert Henry Bartlett, the Burton Brothers, William Collie, Josiah Martin, Elizabeth Pulman, Charles Spencer and George Valentine from the period 1871 to 1886, curated by Hamish Coney.