Image: Lisa Reihana: *Te Wai Ngunguru – Nomads of The Sea*, 2019,
Photo by: Elias Rodriguez, Studio Mark Tantrum.

Lisa Reihana: Nomads of the Sea

27 February – 3 July 2022
Education Resource

EDUCATION

PĀTAKA ART + MUSEUM | poriruacity

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AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS

PARTNERED BY: wētāFX

THANKS TO: creative nz
Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa

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This Education Resource has been designed to support educators in creating exciting and engaging learning opportunities before, during and after their visit to renowned artist Lisa Reihana's exhibition, *Nomads of the Sea*.

It provides background information about Reihana and the context of *Nomads of the Sea* and includes activity suggestions in relation to the work. Informed by the New Zealand Curriculum, the resource is designed to be tailored to various year groups from Year 1 through to Year 13 and beyond, using different approaches as age appropriate.

The exhibition provides opportunity to develop the five key competencies of the New Zealand Curriculum: thinking; using language, symbols, and texts; managing self; relating to others; participating and contributing. It also provides opportunities across specific learning areas including Visual Arts, Te reo Māori, English, Technology, Social Studies (in particular Aotearoa New Zealand Local Histories).

Teachers should visit the show prior to bringing student groups in to evaluate the suitability of each piece. There are elements within *Nomads of the Sea and Tai Whetuki – House of Death Redux* which may be upsetting to some viewers. A Year 9 audience and above is recommended for these elements.

Teachers consider if students are going to focus on one work in particular to anaylse it in detail?

Or will they work across a range of the pieces?

Before

Before you visit *Nomads of the Sea,* find out about some of Lisa Reihana's other artworks. This is the first time this work has been shown in New Zealand. Do any of your students know any of her works already? Students can:

- Record which pieces they have heard of and what prior knowledge they have of those works.
- Produce a collaborative mind-map which explores all things you need to consider when creating digital works, using sketches and other visual information to present the ideas.
- Address the key words developed in the mind-map through discussion and develop a simple key word bank or glossary of definitions to include the following:

  Site specific, installation, identity, projection, film, augmented reality, performance, costume, body adornment, photography, storyboard, scale, lighting, fictional history, disrupting stereotypes, symbols, tikanga, colonisation, narrative.

During

- Use the questions under each artwork to help prompt enquiry and encourage students to discuss with each other the narratives and meanings of the works.
- Refer to the activities listed under each artwork for ways to engage more fully with each artwork.
- Explore each of the key words which have been generated through the mind-map when looking at each work in the show. Use these words to evaluate the use of these elements in each artwork.

Post visit

After your visit use these prompts as suggestions for follow up activities:

- Review any initial mind-maps and see how the artist considered each of those elements.
- Investigate other works Reihana has made. How is this work similar or different? Create a list of similarities and differences, thinking about content of the work, methods of working and where the artworks are located.
- Reihana works across media, have a look online at her work *Kura Moana*, produced for Aotearoa New Zealand Festival of the Arts (on at the same time as *Nomads of the Sea*) to gain insight into the variety of ways she works. Then follow up this initial research by:
    - Take a photo of a location where you could place an artwork such as *Te Wheke-a-Muturangi – The Adversary* or where you could locate a projection, and plan an artwork that would be suitable for this place. Consider what type of artwork it would be e.g. sound, light, video projection, inflatable, sculptural and what size it would be. Draw the artwork, and then draw it in your chosen landscape. If it is moving image, create the storyboard for it along with images.
    - Create a presentation which compares one piece within the show with another work from Reihana. Write a journal report or blog about your visit to look at the artworks. Use your recordings from the visit to generate ideas towards creating an artwork in response to your experience of her selected works, using her work as inspiration.

Whakaaturanga – The exhibition

Lisa Reihana is a pioneering and innovative multi-media artist whose works span performance, photography, installation and moving image. Renowned in particular for her rich, cinematic production, Reihana draws upon primary source material to reimainge Māori and wider *Te Moananui-a-Kiwa* narratives.

Lisa Reihana: Nomads of the Sea presents **four key works** produced over the last 15 years.

Following on from Reihana's acclaimed survey, *Cinemania*, at Campbelltown Art Centre as part of the as part of the 2018 Sydney Festival program, *Lisa Reihana: Nomads of the Sea* presents works made over the last 15 years. The exhibition focuses on Reihana's distinctive exploration of large-scale, immersive installations and offers insight into her weaving together numerous threads, from museology, archives and historical accounts, to pūrakau Māori, whakapapa and Māori belief systems.

Pātaka's exhibition includes the Aotearoa premiere of *Te Wai Ngunguru - Nomads of the Sea* (2019), previously exhibited in NIRIN, the 22nd Biennale of Sydney (2020). *Lisa Reihana: Nomads of the Sea* is presented alongside Te Papa's presentation of *In Pursuit of Venus [Infected]* and *New Histories,* Reihana's *Kura Moana* series of site-specific works, commissioned by the 2022 Aotearoa New Zealand Festival of the Arts.

The key works which sit within the show are ***Ihi, Silent Karanga, Tai Whetuki – House of Death Redux, Te Wai Ngunguru - Nomads of the Sea.***

Together, these projects represent the largest survey of Reihana's moving image and installation works to date.

Speaking on *Kura Moana*, the artist says:

> *'Kura Moana focuses on Te Moananui-a-Kiwa, the great ocean, and its role as connector between Aotearoa and across all the Pacific nations. I have created a series of installations that invite families and communities to discover iconic locations on the Wellington waterfront in new ways, to think about some of the local histories and stories that relate to this place. It's about travellers, those who dared to traverse the Pacific, people who seek something new, another life. Kura Moana is a treasure hunt across the waterfront and I'm hoping that kids will go on a journey to discover the different installations – there's music, song, playful inflatable sculptures and an augmented reality experience. I can't wait to bring this art experience to Pōneke.'*

in Pursuit of Venus [infected] iPoV

Reihana created *in Pursuit of Venus [infected]* in response to wallpaper panels she saw by the French entrepreneur Dufour, called *Les Sauvages de la Mer Pacifique*. You can see part of it above. The wallpaper was an idyll – an imagined Pacific world created for European enjoyment.

When Reihana saw it, some 200 years later, she 'couldn't see the Pacific anywhere'. Reihana did not recognise the people as Māori and Pacific peoples.

This provided the inspiration for her artwork *in Pursuit of Venus [infected]*, which retells this time in history from indigenous perspectives. The artwork is often referred to in shorthand as *iPoV*, which also references the film term 'point of view', in this work, suggesting an indigenous point of view.

Image: Lisa Reihana. Aotearoa New Zealand Festival of the Arts. Artist in Focus 2022. Photo by Anna Briggs

Ringa toi | The artist

Lisa Reihana MNZM is a multi-disciplinary artist of Māori (Ngā Puhi, Ngāti Hine, Ngāi Tu) and British descent. Her extensive international profile includes exhibitions in America, Australia, Europe, UK and the Pacific. She was shortlisted for the Walter Prize twice (2008 and 2016). Lisa holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Elam School of Fine Arts, Auckland University and a Masters in Design from UNITEC School of Visual Art and Design.

She represented New Zealand at the 57th International Art Exhibition, Venice, Viva Arte Viva, 2017 and is the 2022 Artist in Focus for the Aotearoa New Zealand Festival of the Arts.

Kaupapa - Themes in the work

Lisa Reihana is an artist who has helped forge the development of time-based art in Aotearoa New Zealand. She works across diverse media including digital video, film, photography, sound, performance, sculpture and design. Reihana assumes many roles in the production of her work, that of the artist as well as actor, filmmaker, photographer, director, writer and dramaturge. Her practice is driven by collaborative work with communities, described as kanohi ki te kanohi (face to face). Reihana's works portray complex identities, breaking down one dimensional stereotypes.

Reihana has an ongoing preoccupation with identity, life and death, conflation of time, interest in fictional and non-fictional characters and the creation of compelling 'otherworlds'. Her works unpack complex ideas around Māori and transpacific identity through costume, mythology and interrogates the colonial gaze, the fabrication of history and the representation of peoples.

In a wider sense, Reihana's work considers the impact the impacts of colonisation on places and people who inhabit those places.

Ihi, 2020

Two-channel UHD-video, stereo sound

Commissioned by Regional Facilities Auckland, and displayed in the Aotea Centre in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand.

Ihi tells the story of Papatūānuku and her son, Tāne. In the beginning, Ranginui and Papatūānuku were locked in a tight embrace. Their children, trapped in the darkness between their parents, sought to separate their parents. It was Tāne whose strong legs pushed his parents apart, ushering in the world of light.

Above: Lisa Reihana, *Ihi* (video still), 2020

While most retellings focus on the separation of Ranginui and Papatūānuku, *Ihi* foregrounds the relationship between mother and son, and the transference of power between generations. The work begins with Papatūānuku hapū, pregnant with one of her 70 daughters and 70 sons, while Tāne surveys the view he has created - a cosmos of stars and moody brooding skies. Spanning the ground to ceiling, earth to stars, *Ihi* considers the life force and power that exists in the newly created space from the perspective of two of creation's main characters.

Ngohe | Activity

As a young person living in Aotearoa, why is this creation story important to know? Discuss with another student the story as you understand it.

Do you know any creation stories from other cultures? Have you ever watched a short film about them?

Watch an excerpt of the video for *Ihi*, filmed when this work was part of the *Toi Tū Toi Ora: Contemporary Māori Art* exhibition at Auckland Art Gallery. You can navigate this virtual tour by using the book icon to find this artwork in the exhibition:

Click here to open the virtual tour for *Ihi*.

What colours do you notice in this moving artwork? Write them down, what do you think of when you see those colours, how do those colours make you feel? Do those colours have a meaning to you?

This artwork focuses on the story of Ranginui and Papatūānuku along with their son Tāne. Choose one of their other children from the list below, create a mind-map of things you could draw to help show their qualities. Then have a go drawing out a simplified figure with any symbols which help show their powers.

Select five Māori atua, gods, from the list below, write a poem as a way of describing their powers and what their areas of knowledge are.

Tāne-mahuta – atua of forests and birds

Hine-te-iwaiwa – atua of weaving, childbirth, and the cycles of the moon

Tāwhirimātea – atua of weather, wind and lightingMahuika - atua of fire

Haumia-tiketike – atua of uncultivated food

Rongomātane – atua of cultivated plants

Hine-nui-te-pō – atua of night and she receives the spirits of humans when they die

Tangaroa – atua of ocean

Hinemoana – atua of ocean

Tūmatauenga – atua of war and hunting

Rūaumoko – atua of earthquakes

Silent Karanga, 2008

Single-channel video, HD video, 9:16, colour, silent, 3:00 mins

Commissioned by Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington
Courtesy of the artist.

A karanga is often performed by women to formally welcome manuhiri on to the marae or meeting place. In *Silent Karanga*, a Māori woman, barefoot and dressed in black, sings out mutely to the viewer. Here, the karanga remains inaudible to visitors, a silence doubly rendered by the encasing vitrine.

The call is heard, however, by an otherwordly bird, who enters the frame. Perhaps a melody is even heard in the minds of viewers who recognise the woman as the famous

Image: Lisa Reihana, *Silent Karanga* (video still), 2008

singer and performer, Whirimako Black. Known for her songs in te reo Māori, here Black lipsyncs the lyrics of *He Taonga*, an ode written to honour the Māori Battalion. *Silent Karanga* in this way connects the karanga with the space of other realms, between this world, and that unheard, unseen.

Ngohe | Activity

Have you ever been welcomed onto a marae with a karanga?
If so, how did it make you feel?

How do you feel watching something when you can't hear what is being said or sung?

Why do you think this part doesn't have any sound to it? What effect does that create for the viewer and experience?

What do you think the Tūī represents?

What do you know about the Māori Battalion? Click here for more information on this.
Why do you think a 'silent karanga' might be performed in honour of the Māori Battalion?

Write a song or poem that you might sing or say to celebrate someone you love when they have passed away.

Tai Whetuki – House of Death Redux, 2015-16

Ultra-HD, widescreen cinema aspect ratio, two-channel video, sound, 15:00 mins

Commissioned by the Auckland Arts Festival 2015
Courtesy of the artist.

Above: Lisa Reihana, *Te Wai Ngunguru – Nomads of the Sea* (video still), 2020

Tai Whetuki – House of Death Redux explores Māori and Pacific practices surrounding death and mourning. A young man, dying, enacts the passage from life to death. Characters emerge from the forest and waters to accompany him on his journey: a mourning woman, a chief mourner dressed in a resplendent costume modelled after Tahitian drawings and museum collections, and Hine-nui-te-pō (the goddess of night and death) herself.

Māori and Pacific tikanga and knowledge are woven through the materials, costuming and relationship to land. Water flows backwards and bones are scraped and cleaned in the manner of a hauhaunga. Shown as double-screen projections with mirrored flooring, viewers enter into an immersive installation where narratives are reflected, fragmented and multiplied. In the threshold between life and death, the artist seems to imply spirtual and communal enounters multiply.

Filmed at Karekare, a massacre site with its own dark history and strong cultural resonance, located near Auckland on the West Coast of Aotearoa.

"When recalling near-death experiences, people often talk about moving towards the light. I'm interested in the contrast between light and dark. To me this movement literally suggests birth of a new life. Hinenuitepō is a very powerful female figure in our creation stories; she is the goddess of death. I am heartened by the idea that this feminine quality

that births us also guides us at death. She is one of a procession of characters who emerge from within the enveloping darkness of the room, enacting the passage from life to death. A Māori warrior looks for a place to die; Hinenuitepō guides his spirit across the watery space of the underworld. The scraping of bones recreates the Māori hauhanga ceremony. Māori tikanga (custom) is powerfully evoked and the body is intimately connected to landscape.

I'm very interested in the Tahitian Chief Mourner character who appears within in Pursuit of Venus. I wanted to explore the Chief Mourner in greater depth in Tai Whetuki, where he is far more terrifying and violent. Making his costume imparted a huge appreciation of the techniques required to create it. It took years of research to understand the various parts of their costume, and the mother-of-pearl breast plate took weeks to sew using fishing line. Traditional makers would have used threads made of plant material which required its own production." – Lisa Reihana

View the original mourning costume artifact the artist took inspiration from in the Te Papa Pacific Cultures collection. Click here to view.

Ngohe | Activity

Reihana talks about identity and the use of the mask in *Tai Whetuki – House of Death Redux* in this interview with her. She also talks about feelings, and inquiry, following your dreams because 'that's where the magic happens!' Click here to view.

How do the symbols or techniques used by the artist create meaning in the work? See the table below.

Consider the following features within the piece as symbols and write a how each one can be seen to create meaning. In this case a symbol refers to either a material object or the use of a film convention in the work which adds meaning or may represent something more abstract.

Object, action in character or film convention	What it could represent?	Effect on the viewer
Cloak (wrapped around body)	Protection, honouring the dead, tikanga	Thinking about honouring those who have passed on, understanding different cultural traditions for death, protection on the journey to the spirit world
Mask on character		
Passing across the lake		
Dense bush		
Mist/smoke		
Hine-nui-te-pō calling		
Moving through archway		
Hongi		
Water flowing		
Pace / soundtrack		

Consider why this has been produced as a two-channel production, what value/effect does it bring?

Spend some time watching the work; give at least four examples of scenes from the piece where you can explain the effect of the two-channel use.

Traditional costuming aspect: Lisa has used traditional making techniques in the adornment of the chief mourner (mask wearer) in this piece. Research traditions around what people wear when mourning the dead in cultures you identify with. Consider how these traditions may have changed over time. Draw what someone might have worn, or design a modern version of this.

As opposed to celebrations which occur when someone is born, death is at the opposite end of life, and in some cultures a difficult subject to talk about. How can the ways we mourn, or our rituals and practices around death, help those who are left?

Did you notice the water dispenser in the gallery? Find out what whakanoa means, and why it might be important in connection with viewing this artwork.

Create a storyboard which is an example of how a family could celebrate the life of a loved one who has passed.

Think about your ancestry, however far back or recently can you go? Explore some of the traditions around death from a culture you connect with. If you have European ancestry, explore the history of those specific cultures, rather than what we see expressed today.

Create a performance piece which showcases another cultural approach to death practices.

Develop a spoken word performance piece which addresses ideas of how we deal with death in society.

Te Wai Ngunguru – Nomads of the Sea, 2019

3-channel 3D UHD video: multi-channel audio, steel, lighting installation with sculptural components, 19 minutes; dimensions variable

Co-commissioned by Sharjah Art Foundation and Creative New Zealand, Ngā Aho Whakaari, Te Taura Whiri Māori Language Commission and Jan Warburton Charitable Trust.

Co-produced by Artprojects and Reihanamations Ltd.
Courtesy of the artist and Artprojects, Northcote, Australia.

Above: Lisa Reihana, *Te Wai Ngunguru – Nomads of the Sea* (video still), 2019

Te Wai Ngunguru – Nomads of the Sea weaves historical fact with fiction to explore the social tensions between cultural leadership, gender roles and political survival. Set in 19th century New Zealand, the work centres on the contrasting circumstances of two women: Charlotte Badger, a Pākehā fugitive, and Puhi, a Māori woman of proud Ngā Puhi descent. Welcomed by Rangatira Huri Waka, Charlotte gains protection and becomes a strategic tool in the fight against encroaching colonisation. Charlotte's presence also increasingly introduces western concepts, upending matriarchal norms and riling Puhi. Refuting the assumed stereotypes of hapless women, Charlotte and Puhi offer complicated and contradictory reflections on the relationship between gender and power in early colonial Aotearoa. Narrated through the voice of a gender-fluid Storyteller, *Te Wai Ngunguru – Nomads of the Sea* contrasts positions of female agency to ask who is the first daughter of Aotearoa? Where does her descent lie?

Ngohe | Activity

View this short video clip where the artist talks about her work in the Aotearoa New Zealand Arts Festival:

She talks directly of 'travellers, strong people who dare to come across the Pacific, who dare to travel, who dare to find.'

What is the story that is being told? Who are the characters? Describe the time, place, and setting of the story. Is this story fact or imagined or reimagined? Explain the relationships between the characters.

Click here to find out more information on Charlotte Badger, the European woman depicted in this piece.

Write a journal account of her experiences portrayed in the artwork.

In the exhibition, we see a sailing ship within the show. *Te Wai Ngunguru – Nomads of the Sea* reminds us of people journeying to Aotearoa, and of the people who were here before Europeans arrived. This idea of journeying or voyaging can remind us of the shared histories of peoples arriving to this land over time.

Image: Lisa Reihana: *Nomads of The Sea*, 2022

What do you know about your ancestry?

In groups, discuss the idea of journeying from one land to another. How could you show this idea through a series of images (up to 5). This could become the storyboard for a moving digital work or be still photographs.

Aotearoa today comprises many cultures. *Te Wai Ngunguru – Nomads of the Sea* looks at two cultures joining, through Europeans arriving to Aotearoa from afar. In the film we see a child, the daughter of the Māori chief and the European woman. Reflect on your own ancestry and where your parents/grandparents/great grandparents are from, if you know; it could be from within Aotearoa or across countries.

- Create a mind-map of the things you know about yourself from your ancestry, and the places those people are from. Are there special features about the land where they are from? Think about your own pepeha if you know it, if you don't know it, find out what a pepeha is. Use this information in your mind-map to talk about where you are from.

Discuss in groups of three to answer the question: How does where we are from influence what we think and how we feel about the world? Think about different cultural traditions. With respect for differences of world views and traditions, use examples from your group to show these influences.

Resources | Rauemi

Books & print resources

CINEMANIA: LISA REIHANA, Campbelltown Arts Centre, 2018

Lisa-Reihana-Cinemania-Schools-Resource, Campbelltown Arts Centre, 2018

Ngā Atua: Māori Gods, Robyn Kahukiwa, Oratia, 2017

Toi Tū Toi Ora: Contemporary Māori Art, edited by Nigel Borell, Penguin and Auckland Art Gallery *Toi o Tāmaki*, 2022

Icons from TE PAPA Pacific, Te Papa Press, 2006

Online

FROM THE PAST, FOR TOMORROW Teaching Resource, Te Papa
https://www.tepapa.govt.nz/sites/default/files/from-the-past-for-tomorrow.pdf

Virtual Tour, Toi Tū Toi Ora, Auckland Art Gallery, 2021
https://virtual.aucklandartgallery.com/ttto/

Toi Tū Toi Ora: Contemporary Māori Art | Teaching Resource, 2021
https://rfacdn.nz/artgallery/assets/media/toi-tu-toi-ora-em-resource-22dec.pdf

Aotearoa New Zealand Festival of the Arts, Artist in Focus, 2022
https://www.festival.nz/events/artist-focus/

RNZ, 'What's decolonisation', 2022
https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/te-manu-korihi/401486/watch-what-s-decolonisation

New Zealand History, 28th Maori Battalion, Fact Sheet, 2022
https://nzhistory.govt.nz/war/maori-and-the-second-world-war/impact

New Zealand History, Charlotte Badger, 2022
https://nzhistory.govt.nz/culture/frontier-of-chaos/charlotte-badger

Artist interviews

Aotearoa New Zealand Festival of the Arts, Artist in Focus, 2022
https://www.festival.nz/events/artist-focus/#watch

Lisa Reihana on representation and identity in 'Lisa Reihana: Emissaries', Te Papa
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qWs6ZKY7gUU&t=55s

Auckland Art Gallery, Lisa Reihana on *Ihi*
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IQTKLTl9P-OCJMC-6PkcAl5ZUR8W0m8X/view?usp=sharing

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