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HUMCARD
notes from an artist

Welcome to the third edition of HUMcard. *Designed especially to thank our patrons and supporters, HUMcard is a feature we will continue sending out throughout the year, bringing you an exclusive look into international projects by New Zealand artists.*

Our second edition featured Judy Millar's current show at Museum St. Gallen in Switzerland, and this edition is by a group of four artists who together make up the ***Mata Aho Collective****:* ***Erena Baker****,* ***Sarah Hudson****,* ***Bridget Reweti*** and ***Terri Te Tau.***

Spread across Aotearoa New Zealand, Mata Aho Collective is a country-wide collaboration between four Māori women who create conceptual, large-scale installations that cite customary Māori textiles using everyday materials. In 2017, the collective exhibited a major work at documenta 14 *in Kassel, Germany, which is currently showing in the* Oceania *exhibition (on in Paris until July 7th 2019).* ***This month they installed their newest work,*** **Mahuika,** ***at the*** **2019 Honolulu Biennial** ***in Hawai'i.*** To Make Wrong / Right / Now *curated by Nina Tonga, opened earlier this month and runs until 5 May 2019 at ten various locations throughout Honolulu.*

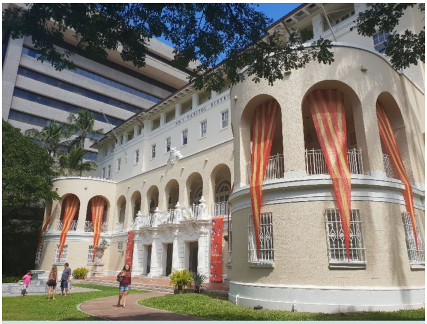
Written exclusively for our HUM supporters, Mata Aho Collective share some insights into their latest work and its inspiration below, along with a few images of it in situ. Scroll down to learn more about Mahuika*, straight from the artists themselves.*

(L-R): Erena Baker, Sarah Hudson, Terri Te Tau and Bridget Rewiti from Mata Aho Collective, at the opening of the 2019 Honolulu Biennial. Photo courtesy of the artists.

Mata Aho Collective on 2019 Honolulu Biennial

"Our work *Mahuika* is made from red and yellow industrial barrier mesh, wool and cable ties.

Ten pennant flags spill out from the archways of the Hawai'i State Art Museum's porticos. Each pennant represents a flaming fingernail of Mahuika, the Māori fire deity who gifted the knowledge of fire to her descendants."

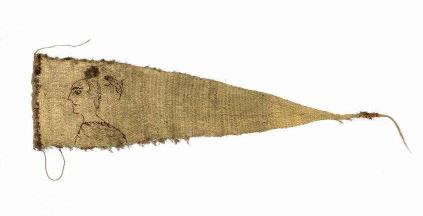


Mata Aho Collective's new work *Mahuika* (2019), installed at Hawai'i State Art Museum, Honolulu. Ten pennants measuring 2m x 8m, made of barrier mesh, wool and cable ties. Photo courtesy of Mata Aho Collective.

"On a research trip to Honolulu last year, at the time of Hurricane Lane, there was a large amount of industrial temporary boundaries present - plastic tape, cones and mesh-covered chain-link fences around vacant lots. The use of temporary barrier mesh suited our *kaupapa*, or foundation, to center on Mahuika and women who work to push through boundaries. We wanted *Mahuika* to be an acknowledgement of strong female leadership."

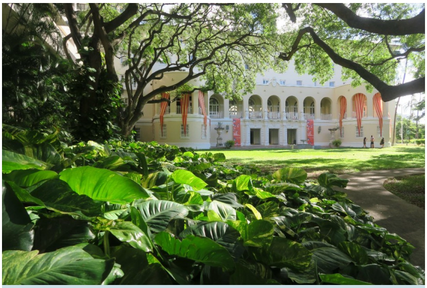
Top image: Pre-installation of *Mahuika*. *Bottom left*: Interior view of Mata Aho Collective installing *Mahuika*. *Bottom right*: Exterior view of the completed installation of *Mahuika*, on-site at Hawai'i State Art Museum, Honolulu. All photos courtesy of Mata Aho Collective.

"The pennant shape was inspired by a *taonga* we spent time with in the British Museum Collection Store. It is a two-metre-long flag, made out of muka, wool, feathers and bird skin and there is not a lot of information about it. The scale and presence of this taonga moved us to develop a work that similarly affirms our self-determination."



Māori pendant made of flax, kaka feathers, white feathers, bird skin, wool. 254cms long x 66cms wide, made in Taranaki, part of the British Museum online collection. Oc1982, Q.705 ©**Trustees of the British Museum**

"*Mahuika* is installed inside the portico archways and migrates down the outside of the building. While the red and yellow colours echo the fires of Mahuika and lava flows of Pele, goddess of volcanoes and fire in Hawai'i, they are also an acknowledgement of the U.S.-occupied Kingdom of Hawai'i. It was significant to us when we chose the site that the flags would be visible from both the State Capitol and the Iolani Palace grounds."



Mata Aho Collective's latest project, *Mahuika*, installed at Hawai'i State Art Museum as part of the 2019 Honolulu Biennial, on from 8 March - 5 May 2019. Photo courtesy of the artists.

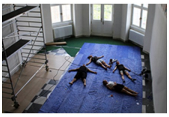
More on the Collective

Mata Aho Collective is a collaboration between four Māori women who produce large-scale textile-based work, commenting on the complexity of Māori lives. Their conceptual framework is founded within the contemporary realities of mātauranga Māori and together they produce works with single collective authorship that are bigger than their individual capabilities. Members are Erena Baker, Te Atiawa ki Whakarongotai, Ngāti Toa Rangātira; Sarah Hudson, Ngāti Awa, Ngāi Tūhoe; Bridget Rewiti, Ngāti Ranginui, Ngāi Te Rangi; and Terri Te Tau, Rangitāne ki Wairarapa.

Recent exhibitions include *Océanie*, Musée du Quai Branly, Paris, France (2019); *Oceania*, Royal Academy of Arts, London, UK (2018); *Signature Art Prize* Singapore Art Museum, Singapore, (2018); *documenta* 14, Kassel, Germany (2017); *Making Space,* Centre of Contemporary Art, Christchurch, NZ (2017); *Noho 16,* Whau Art Centre, Auckland NZ (2016); *Disrupting the Narrative,* Thistle Hall, Wellington NZ (2015); and *International Artist Initiated,* David Dale Gallery, Glasgow UK (2014).
Image: Mata Aho Collective making *Te Whare Pora*, Enjoy Public Art Gallery, Wellington, 2012, sourced from documenta 14: Daybook.

See more on Mata Aho's website...

Tauira, installed at The Dowse Art Museum, Lower Hutt, 2018


Kiko Moana installation shot, *documenta 14*, Kassel, Germany, 2017

Installing *Kaokao* at Toi Pōneke Arts Centre, Wellington, 2014

Te Whare Pora installed at Enjoy Public Art Gallery, Wellington, 2012

We hope you enjoyed this HUMcard. Our next edition will be taking a closer look at ***Dane Mitchell's highly anticipated project*** **Post hoc,** *which will be representing New Zealand* ***at this year's Venice Biennale****—an event we are really looking forward to attending and covering on HUM.* Post Hoc *will be presented at several locations throughout the floating city, including at the Palazzina Canonica and will be open to the public from 11 May - 12 November 2019.*

Once again, we want to give a big thanks to all of you who have supported HUM over the past couple of years. We are continuing to grow and expand our programming to include more exhibitions and events happening abroad—a full list of which can be found here on our Calendar page.

HUM is busier than ever and we wouldn't be able to keep doing what we do without your generosity and encouragement. So, thank you and ka kite anō!

Contemporary HUM is the first centralised platform dedicated to documenting New Zealand art projects abroad. We publish conversations, reviews and essays on the international projects of New Zealand creative practitioners, in addition to a calendar of events and exhibitions.