



Thinking Historically in the Present

Robyn Kahukiwa, Kahurangiariki Smith  
and Sharjah Biennial 15

by Megan Tamati-Quennell

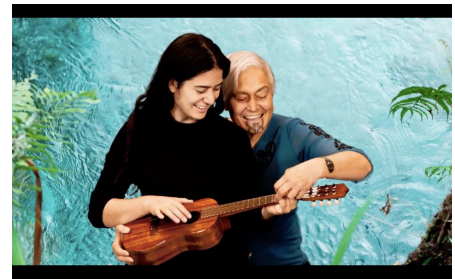
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Robyn Kahukiwa, *The Outcast*, 1980. Oil on board, 1230 x 1030mm. Ngā Puhipuhi o Te Herenga Waka Victoria University of Wellington Art Collection (VUWCE. 2009.65). Image courtesy of the artist and Te Herenga Waka.



Robyn Kahukiwa, *Taniwha Wounded but Not Dead*, 1990. From the where *Hineteiwaiwa* by Haeata Māori Womens Collective alongside *Tihe Mauri Ora*. Oil and alkyd oil on unstretched canvas, 2100 x 4200mm. Ethnologisches Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, VI 57214. Image courtesy of Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Ethnologisches Museum / Heinz-Günther Malenz CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.



Kahurangiariiki Smith, *He Tangi Aroha - Mama Don't Cry* (video still), 2019. Image courtesy of the artist.



Robyn Kahukiwa, *Return Stolen Lands*, 2022. From the "Sovereign Māori Nations" series. Acrylic on cotton canvas, 1200 x 900mm. Sharjah Art Foundation Collection, Sharjah. Photograph: Kate van der Drift. Courtesy of the artist and Season, Tāmaki Makaurau.



Kahurangiariiki Smith, *Hina*, 2019. Installation view: Sharjah Biennial 15, Kalba, 2023. Image courtesy of the artist.



Kahurangiariiki Smith, *MāoriGrl*, 2022. Supported by Sharjah Art Foundation. Installation view: Sharjah Biennial 15, Bait Al Serkal, 2023. Photograph: Danko Stjepanovic. Courtesy of Sharjah Art Foundation.

*Founded in 1993, the Sharjah Biennial in the United Arab Emirates has grown to become a well-respected international event, especially since 2003 under the artistic leadership of Hoor Al Qasimi. Delayed by two years, and reimagined following the untimely passing of the initial curator, Okwui Enwexor, Sharjah Biennial 15 opened with an*

*expansive and re-centred vision of global contemporary art. Here, Wellington-based curator Megan Tamati-Quennell writes about Aotearoa artists Robyn Kahukiwa and Kahurangi Smith and their place within the biennial.*

Sharjah Biennial 15 was conceived by the late Okwui Enwezor, the acclaimed curator who “remapped the artworld” and predicted the “decolonized futures” of globalised exhibitions.<sup>[01]</sup> Curated by Hoor Al Qasimi, the President and Director of the Sharjah Art Foundation, following Enwezor’s passing in 2019, it opened on 7 February this year in Sharjah, in the United Arab Emirates, and will run until 11 June 2023.<sup>[02]</sup>

The title of this iteration, *Thinking Historically in the Present*, was provided by Enwezor. It acknowledges both the conceptual underpinning of this edition and the late curator’s thinking, but it is clear from the exhibition presented—the scale and the strength of the realised project—that the biennial has been reimagined and authored by Al Qasimi. *Thinking Historically in the Present* features 300 artworks, 150 artists and seventy new commissions, located across five cities and towns and seventeen venues within the Emirate. As a project, it was inspired by the “groundbreaking decolonial legacy” of Enwezor and picked up by Al Qasimi after his death.<sup>[03]</sup> Enwezor’s pioneering exhibition-making practices, such as his landmark 2002 Documenta 11 and 1997 Johannesburg Biennale, and “the polyphonic, decentralised and transnational platform” he created through those projects, are cited by Al Qasimi as models that have influenced her own curatorial strategies.<sup>[04]</sup> These have included her vision not only for this biennial but for Sharjah more extensively as a site for contemporary art.

The fifteenth edition also marks a significant moment as the biennial’s thirty-year anniversary. This version is, as Al Qasimi writes in her curatorial statement in the biennial guidebook, “the culmination of all its predecessors, of relationship-building and conversations unfolding over three decades, both within and beyond Sharjah.”<sup>[05]</sup> The breadth of this year’s biennial—its staggering array of ambitious projects across the Emirate—also highlights the longer development period this time around, evolving over a four-year rather than a two-year period, due in part

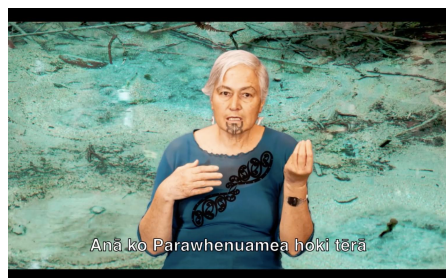
to the delays and restrictions of the Covid-19 pandemic. This iteration has not only been successfully realised by Al Qasimi, it also demonstrates her reconsideration, over many years, of what the Sharjah Biennial could offer and what could be attained. The fifteenth edition expresses the importance of the biennial as “a critical alternative to entrenched institutional thought,” and the Emirate of Sharjah more discursively “as a non-western centre for the circulation of people and ideas.”<sup>[06]</sup> Al Qasimi describes Sharjah as a locale of transition, “a context composed of mobile and migratory communities,” and “a crucible of hybrid cultures.”<sup>[07]</sup>

It is in this non-Western context, and in the pluri-centric environment of Sharjah Biennial 15 that Al Qasimi has advanced, that the art of senior Māori artist Robyn Kahukiwa, of Ngāti Porou, Ngāti Konohi, Te Whānau-a-Ruataupare, Te Whānau-a-Te-Ao, and Te Aitanga-a-Hauiti descent, and emerging Māori artist Kahurangi Smith, who cites her waka as Te Arawa, Tainui, Takitimu, Horouta and Mataatua, have been included. The works of both artists, hand-picked by Al Qasimi through her independent research, are representative of the “ever-evolving cross-cultural solidarities” with the local and regional cultures of the Sharjah Emirate and the Arabian Gulf.<sup>[08]</sup> Kahukiwa’s and Smith’s works cohere strongly with Enwezor’s conception at the core of this biennial—his idea of the postcolonial constellation, where contemporary art is “refracted, not just from the specific site of culture and history but in a more critical sense, from the standpoint of a complex geopolitical configuration.”<sup>[09]</sup>

The work of Kahukiwa and Smith, although unique to Aotearoa and their individual Māori contexts, can be defined in more general terms as decolonial responses to the specific colonial legacy of New Zealand. Both bodies of work in the biennial push against the cultural impositions that have eroded Māori standing, status, wellbeing, knowledge and ways of being. Equally, their works have meaning beyond a colonial New Zealand frame as representations of first nations concepts and philosophies. They also have ‘adjacency’ to other artists and artworks in the biennial, a notion coined by Black feminist theorist of visual culture and contemporary art Tina Campt. Adopted and used by Luke Willis Thompson, a contemporary Aotearoa artist of Fijian descent, Campt’s concept is defined as “the reparative work of transforming

proximity into accountability; the labor of positioning oneself in relation to another in ways that revalue and redress complex histories of dispossession.”<sup>[10]</sup> Camp’s notion of adjacency reinforces Enwezor’s theory of the postcolonial constellation and brings into focus the shared sensibilities of non-Western art within the broader milieu of globalised modernity.

Smith’s three works in the biennial—*He Tangi Aroha – Mama Don’t Cry* (2019), a video installation; *MāoriGrl* (2022), a video game; and *Hina* (2022), a neon-pink LED complete with a pool of water to reflect in—reclaim and reposition mātauranga Māori, or Māori knowledges, Māori epistemologies and tikanga Māori, or correct Māori practice. Importantly, they also express notions of intergenerational transfer familiar in Sharjah and the Gulf, where “ancestral wisdom is relayed orally from one generation to the next,” as outlined by Al Qasimi.<sup>[11]</sup>



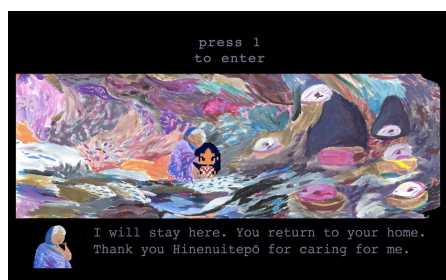
Kahurangiariki Smith, *He Tangi Aroha – Mama Don’t Cry* (video still), 2019. Image courtesy of the artist.



Kahurangiariki Smith, *He Tangi Aroha – Mama Don’t Cry* (video still), 2019. Image courtesy of the artist.



Kahurangiariki Smith, *MāoriGrl* (video game still), 2022. Image courtesy of the artist.



Kahurangiariki Smith, *MāoriGrl* (video game still), 2022. Image courtesy of the artist.



Kahurangiariki Smith, *He Tangi Aroha – Mama Don’t Cry*, 2019. Installation view: Sharjah Biennial 15, Bait Al Serkal, 2023. Photograph: Danko Stjepanovic. Courtesy of Sharjah Art Foundation.

In recent years Smith has been collaborating with her mother, Dr Aroha Yates-Smith. Yates-Smith is an eminent Māori academic whose specialist knowledge is focused on the ancient Māori feminine and the many personifications of atua wāhine and female tūpuna, or ancestors of the physical and metaphysical worlds. Two of Smith's works, *MāoriGrl* and *Hina*, make visible her mother's research and in particular Yates-Smith's PhD thesis titled "Hine! E Hine!" that is centred on pre-colonial atua wāhine.<sup>[12]</sup> *MāoriGrl*, Smith's video game, serves as a visual reference to the story of the atua Hinetītama becoming Hinenuitepō, but also operates as a form of corrective, designed to counteract the misunderstanding of the Hinetītama–Hinenuitepō narrative, which has been changed over time. One of the key ambitions of the work for Smith, she has said, is to create a connection back to those atua wāhine for younger Māori people. Hinetītama is personified in *MāoriGrl* with the ability to give life, while Hinenuitepō is the tupuna associated with death and the atua in the afterworld who receives those who have passed on. The work employs 80s video-game aesthetics, evoking Space Invaders, Pac-Man or Frogger, for those who remember. The main protagonist in Smith's game is a pixelated kōtiro, or Māori girl, who journeys through painterly backgrounds to meet the kuia, or female Māori elder, Hinenuitepō.

In the film *He Tangi Aroha – Mama Don't Cry*, Smith is with her mother learning a Ngāti Rangiwewehi iwi waiata, or tribal song. Through the waiata, held by her mother, Smith explores her relationship with both her mother and with a river that forms an intrinsic part of her identity. "Mum speaks and sings of Parawhenuamea, the deity of alluvial waters and silt. In 2012, Mum was one who stood for this awa [river] at the Tribunal hearing of Ngāti Rangiwewehi."<sup>[13]</sup> The film also presents a Māori pedagogy and attempts to shift "the deliberate and extensive effects of colonisation ... the stripping of old knowledge and ways of being within the world."<sup>[14]</sup> *He Tangi Aroha – Mama Don't Cry* conveys the way iwi knowledge is embodied by "elders; whānau, tūpuna and atua" and expresses how mātauranga-a-iwi, tribal knowledge, is shared and received.<sup>[15]</sup>

Her third work, *Hina*, is installed at the Kalba Ice Factory, a brutalist concrete structure that was built in the 1970s and which

has been flawlessly retrofitted for the exhibition of art. An hour and a half from the Sharjah city centre, Smith's LED sits in context with works of incredible standing and scale. These include a work by Colombian artist Doris Salcedo, *Uprooted* (2020–22), which uses dead trees to create an unliveable and enigmatic house; American artist of Jamaican descent Nari Ward's *Duty Colossus* (2023), a site-specific reimagining of a 2011 sculpture, *Nu Colossus*, that took its lead from structures made of found materials in Jamaican fishing villages; and Anishinaabe artist Rebecca Belmore's mixed-media installation *Ayum-ee-aawach Oomama-mowan: Speaking to Their Mother* (1991). Belmore's work—a giant megaphone made from wood and leather or hide—was created in response to the Kanehsatā:ke Resistance or the Oka Crisis, a Mohawk uprising formed by the community in 1990. With similarities to the 1978 protest led by Eva Rickard in Whaingaroa Raglan in the North Island of Aotearoa, the Kanehsatā:ke Resistance was mounted to halt the desecration of their ancestral burial grounds by the development of a golf course. Belmore's megaphone has subsequently been used across Canada, at other sites of “colonial injustice.”<sup>[16]</sup>

*He Tangi Aroha – Mama Don't Cry* and *MāoriGrl* debuted in Bait Al Serkal, a three-storey building in the city of Sharjah that has been an arts and cultural centre since the 1990s. Here, Smith's works sit alongside powerful projects including a 77-minute film commissioned for the biennial, *Angela Davis: A World of Greater Freedom* (2023), by Manthia Diawara, a New York-based Malian writer, filmmaker, cultural theorist, scholar and art historian. Diawara's film is focused on Angela Davis, the American activist, philosopher, academic and author, and her philosophy “that centres the lived experience of the oppressed and the unsung.”<sup>[17]</sup> Although not as directly political as Davis and not as seasoned as her, Smith's two screen-based works sit comfortably in context with Diawara's film. Her work, like Davis's, is grounded and contains clear and culturally located perspectives. Her two digital works demonstrate a substance and depth informed and inspired by the seminal research undertaken by her mother but also embodied by the artist herself.

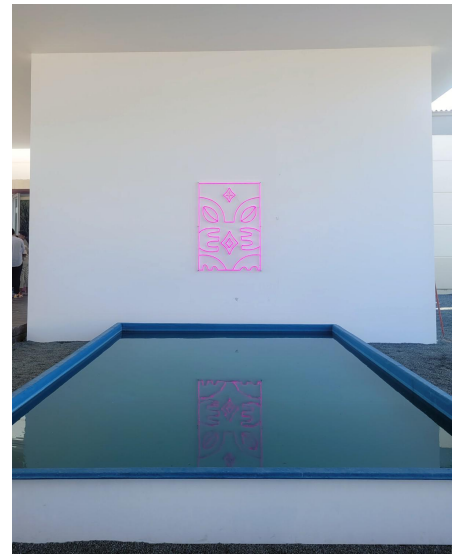




Rebecca Belmore, *Ayum-ee-aawach Oomamowan: Speaking to Their Mother*, 1991. Collection of Walter Phillips Gallery, Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity, Alberta; purchased with the support of the York Wilson Endowment Award; and administered by the Canada Council for the Arts. Installation view: Sharjah Biennial 15, Kalba Ice Factory, 2023. Photograph: Danko Stjepanovic. Image courtesy of Sharjah Art Foundation.



Rebecca Belmore, *Ayum-ee-aawach Oomamowan: Speaking to Their Mother*, 1991. Collection of Walter Phillips Gallery, Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity, Alberta; purchased with the support of the York Wilson Endowment Award; and administered by the Canada Council for the Arts. Installation view: Sharjah Biennial 15, Kalba Ice Factory, 2023. Photograph: Danko Stjepanovic. Image courtesy of Sharjah Art Foundation.



Kahurangiariiki Smith, *Hina*, 2019. Installation view: Sharjah Biennial 15, Kalba, 2023. Image courtesy of the artist.



Doris Salcedo, *Uprooted*, 2020–2022. 804 dead trees and steel; 3000 x 650 x 500 cm. Installation view: Sharjah Biennial 15, Kalba Ice Factory, Sharjah Art Foundation, 2023. Photograph: Juan Castro. Courtesy of the artist.



Doris Salcedo, *Uprooted*, 2020–2022. 804 dead trees and steel; 3000 x 650 x 500 cm. Installation view: Sharjah Biennial 15, Kalba Ice Factory, Sharjah Art Foundation, 2023. Photograph: Juan Castro. Courtesy of the artist.

Robyn Kahukiwa is shown in the Sharjah Art Museum in the City of Sharjah. Her representation in the biennial is recognition of her status as a leading Māori woman artist. Kahukiwa is an artist who has “consciously sought to place herself within the continuum of Māori visual culture” and through her art has “advocated for the wellbeing of Māori people.”<sup>[18]</sup> Nineteen works by Kahukiwa, which



span fifty years of her career, have been assembled by Al Qasimi for the biennial with the on-the-ground help in Aotearoa of the artist and her art dealer, Francis McWhannell of Season Gallery in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. A small survey of Kahukiwa’s extensive practice, the selection of paintings covers several key aspects of her career. The first influential moment includes works created in the 1970s: *Aroha* (1971), *The Migration* (1973), *The Choice* (1974) and *Ko wai au?* (1979). These are paintings that focus on the effects of Māori urbanisation. Her paintings from this period highlight the alienation, displacement and dislocation from tribal homelands, and the inequities experienced by Māori following migration to the cities for work and education, and to become part of the monetised economy. The symbolism of the paintings conveys notions including growing Māori discontent with the assimilation policies of the government of the day, our unequal status with non-Māori, language loss and the erosion of our culture and wellbeing. Kahukiwa’s 1970s paintings demonstrate a key theme carried by the artist throughout her career: a critique of the impact of colonisation on Māori people.

A second body of significant works in the biennial is from Kahukiwa’s acclaimed “Wahine Toa” series. Kahukiwa is said to be most recognised for her images of Māori women—“female archetypes that are representative of women in our own families and communities.”<sup>[19]</sup> Three of the eight paintings realised for “Wahine Toa”—*Hinetītama* (1980), *Taranga* (1982) and *Muriranga-Whenua* (1983)—have been brought to Sharjah. In the series, Kahukiwa recasts female atua as the main characters in Māori cosmological and whakapapa, or genealogical, narratives. Her “Wahine Toa” images, alongside the writing of leading Māori author Patricia Grace, in a publication of the same name, reposition the female atua as vital tūpuna who are “powerful, authoritative and challenging.”<sup>[20]</sup> Like Kahurangiariiki Smith’s *MāoriGrl*, the series revises incorrect narratives. The works confront gender constructs introduced through colonisation and—through their reimagining—highlight the disparities between the status of Māori women pre- and post-colonisation. Like much of Kahukiwa’s output, her “Wahine Toa” works function “not only as art but as an imprint of cultural values.”<sup>[21]</sup>



Robyn Kahukiwa, *The Choice*, 1974. Collection of Pātaka Art + Museum, Porirua, New Zealand (left); and *The migration*, 1973. Collection of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington. Installation view: Sharjah Biennial 15, Sharjah Art Museum, 2023. Photograph: Shanavas Jamaluddin. Courtesy of Sharjah Art Foundation.



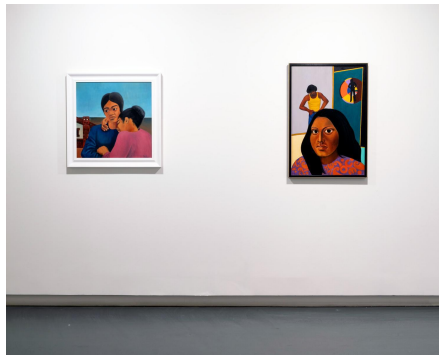
Robyn Kahukiwa, *Aroha*, 1971. Oil on board, 595 x 595mm. Fletcher Trust Collection, Tāmaki Makaurau. Photograph: Jess O'Brien. Courtesy of the artist and the New Zealand Portrait Gallery Te Pūkenga Whakaata.



Robyn Kahukiwa, *Hinētītama*, 1980. From the “Wāhine Toa” series. Oil on board, 1315 x 1320mm. Collection of Te Manawa, Te Papaioea Palmerston North. Image courtesy of the artist and Te Manawa.



Robyn Kahukiwa, *Muriranga-Whenua*, 1983. From the “Wāhine Toa” series. Oil on board, 1185 x 1185mm. Ngā Puhipuhi o Te Herenga Waka Victoria University of Wellington Art Collection VUW.1984.2. Image courtesy of the artist and Te Herenga Waka.



Robyn Kahukiwa, *Aroha*, 1971. Fletcher Trust Collection, Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland (left); and *Ko wai au?*, 1979. Collection of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington. Installation view: Sharjah Biennial 15, Sharjah Art Museum, 2023. Photograph: Shanavas Jamaluddin. Courtesy of Sharjah Art Foundation.

The final key moment in the presentation of Kahukiwa’s work in *Thinking Historically in the Present* are two totemic, loose canvas paintings—*Tihe Mauri Ora* (1990), held in the Fletcher Trust Collection in Tāmaki Makaurau, Aotearoa, and *Taniwha Wounded but Not Dead* (1990), held in the Staatliche Museen in Berlin, Germany.<sup>[22]</sup> Kahukiwa’s artistic career developed as the Māori Land Rights movement gained momentum in Aotearoa. “Issues related to the Treaty of Waitangi have never been far from Kahukiwa’s brush,” and concepts like tino rangatiratanga, or Māori sovereignty, are central to much of her practice.<sup>[23]</sup>

The two paintings, *Tihe Mauri Ora* and *Taniwha Wounded but Not Dead*, formed the front walls of *Ko Hineteiwaiwa Te Whare*, a women's meeting house created by the Haeata Māori Women's Art Collective for the exhibition *Mana Tiriti* at the Wellington City Gallery in 1990. Kahukiwa was a core member of the Collective, which began in 1983 or 1984 and was active, undertaking artistic projects, into the 90s. In Haeata she worked alongside two phenomenal Wellington-based women: Keri Kaa, a leading educator, te reo Māori speaker and cultural knowledge-holder of Ngāti Porou descent; and Irihapeti Ramsden, a dynamic woman and pioneer of Treaty-based work, of Ngāi Tahu, Ngāti Ira and Rangitāne descent. Ramsden is best known for being the architect of the Cultural Safety Te Kawa Whakaruruhau training programme for Aotearoa health professionals.<sup>[24]</sup> The *Hineteiwaiwa* whare was created in response to the sesquicentennial of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi (the founding document of Aotearoa), a period described by Haeata as “New Zealand’s 150-year history of deceit.”<sup>[25]</sup>

To have two sister works of Kahukiwa's brought back together for the biennial demonstrates the extraordinary effort and insight of Al Qasimi. It reveals her depth of research into Kahukiwa's practice, her understanding of the significance of the paintings within Kahukiwa's oeuvre, and the political context that surrounded their creation. *Tihe Mauri Ora* and *Taniwha Wounded but Not Dead* have not been shown together since the 90s. After the biennial, their return to disparate collections in separate countries means they may not be shown together again. That is, unless their inclusion in this project creates the impetus for them to be reunited and shown in Aotearoa.



Varunika Saraf, *We, The People* (detail), 2018–2022. Installation view: Sharjah Biennial 15, Sharjah Art Museum, 2023. Photograph: Shafeek Nalakath Kareem. Image courtesy of Sharjah Art Foundation.



Emily Kame Kngwarreye, *Yam Multi Color*, 1995; and *My Country*, 1992. Private collection. Installation view: Sharjah Biennial 15, Sharjah Art Museum, 2023. Photograph: Shafeek Nalakath Kareem. Image courtesy of Sharjah Art Foundation.



Robyn Kahukiwa, *Tihe Mauri Ora*, 1990. Fletcher Trust Collection, Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. (left); and *Taniwha Wounded but Not Dead*, 1990. Collection of the Ethnologisches Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (right). Both from the whare *Hineteiwaia* by Haeata Māori Women's Collective. Installation view: Sharjah Biennial 15, Sharjah Art Museum, 2023. Photograph: Shanavas Jamaluddin. Courtesy of Sharjah Art Foundation.



Robyn Kahukiwa, *Family Group 2021*, 2021. Acrylic on canvas, 505 x 605mm. Collection of Kaan Hiini, Tāmaki Makaurau. Photograph: Samuel Hartnett. Courtesy of the artist and Season, Tāmaki Makaurau.



Shelley Niro, *For Fearless and Other Indians*, 1998. Collection of Indigenous Art Centre, Gatineau, Canada. Installation view: Sharjah Biennial 15, Sharjah Art Museum, 2023. Image courtesy of Sharjah Art Foundation. Photo: Shanavas Jamaluddin

Kahukiwa's works in the Sharjah Art Museum sit alongside works from a range of significant artists of similar stature and standing. These include South Asian artist Varunika Saraf. Her installation *We, the People* (2018–22) is made up of seventy-six hand-embroidered works that present “overlooked and erased histories,” including the Union Carbide chemical disaster in Bhopal, India, that killed thousands of people.<sup>[26]</sup> The works from both artists in the Sharjah Art Museum operate as urgent calls for action or for change to “unmake the future that has been set in motion by current events.”<sup>[27]</sup> Kahukiwa's work is also shown with a number of senior Indigenous Australian artists, including the work of the late Eubena Nampitjin, an elder and senior law woman of the Wangkajunga people. Nampitjin's large-scale canvases utilise ceremonial knowledge to “reflect the strength of her culture and community” in the Great Sandy Desert in Central Australia.<sup>[28]</sup>

The work of the late Emily Kame Kngwarreye is also here; she was a senior Indigenous Australian law woman who began painting and working in a contemporary-art context in her seventies, and became one of Australia's most important artists. Another artist shown in the same venue as Kahukiwa is Shelley Niro, a Mohawk filmmaker and visual artist from the Six Nations Reserve in Canada. Niro's work, like Kahukiwa's, foregrounds "the resilience and authenticity of Indigenous women," and critiques "the erasures and exclusions of colonialism."<sup>[29]</sup>

Although only two artists from Aotearoa are included in Sharjah Biennial 15, their works echo the ethos of *Thinking Historically in the Present*, the proposition offered by the late Okwui Enwezor. They also resonate deeply with the foregrounding of non-Western ideas and influence, very much centred in this biennial and in Hoor Al Qasimi's vision for Sharjah as an important location for global contemporary art and critical discourse.

### Footnotes

01. Jason Farago, "Okwui Enwezor, Curator Who Remapped Art World, Dies at 55," *New York Times*, 18 March 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/18/obituaries/okwui-enwezor-dead.html>

02. Megan Tamati-Quennell was invited by the President of the Sharjah Art Foundation and the curator of Sharjah Biennial 15 Hoor Al Qasimi to experience the opening week programme of the biennial which ran from 7 to 11 February 2023. The invitation followed her invitation to, and participation in, the 2022 March Meeting, "The Afterlives of the Postcolonial." She spoke on a panel titled "Persistent Structural Inequalities; Indigeneity and Sovereignty" alongside Indigenous Australian artist Brook Andrew, Native Canadian curator and academic Gerald McMaster and Native American curator and academic Jolene Rickard.

03. Janelle Zara, "The Big-Budget Sharjah Biennial Tackles Postcolonial Fallout with Beauty, Sentimentality, and Nuance," *Artnet*, 23 February 2023, para. 3, <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/sharjah-biennial-review-2255301>

04. Hoor Al Qasimi, "Curatorial Statement," in Hoor Al Qasimi, ed., *Sharjah Biennial 15: Thinking Historically in the Present: Guidebook* (Sharjah Art Foundation, 2023), 11.

05. Hoor Al Qasimi, ed., *Sharjah Biennial 15: Thinking Historically in the Present: Guidebook* (Sharjah: Sharjah Art Foundation, 2023), 9.

06. Ibid, 13.

07. Ibid, 17.

08. Ibid, 10.

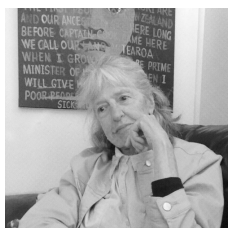


09. Okwui Enwezor, “The Postcolonial Constellation: Contemporary Art in a State of Permanent Transition,” *Research in African Literatures* 34, no. 4 (2003): 57–82, <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/47365/summary>
10. Tina M. Campt, quoted in “Luke Willis Thompson: Adjacency”, press release, Nagel Draxler Kabinett, Berlin, 2019, <https://nagel-draxler.de/exhibition/adjacency>.
11. Hoor Al Qasimi, ed., *Sharjah Biennial 15: Thinking Historically in the Present: Guidebook*, 9.
12. Aroha Yates-Smith, “Hine! E Hine! Rediscovering the Feminine in Māori Spirituality” (PhD dissertation, University of Waikato, 1998).
13. Kahurangiariki Smith, artist’s statement, para. 2, accessed 3 April 2022, <https://www.circuit.org.nz/work/he-tangi-aroha-mama-dont-cry-edit>. Here, Smith refers to the formal hearing of a claim made by the iwi group Ngāti Rangiwewehi against the British Crown, and heard by the Waitangi Tribunal. The Tribunal is a permanent commission of inquiry into breaches of te Tiriti o Waitangi, the Treaty of Waitangi, a document often considered Aotearoa’s founding national document.
14. Ibid, para. 3.
15. Kahurangiariki Smith quoted in, Sharjah Art Foundation, “Kahurangiariki Smith,” in *Sharjah Biennial 15: Thinking Historically in the Present: Guidebook*, ed. Hoor Al Qasimi, 139.
16. Rebecca Belmore quoted in, Sharjah Art Foundation, “Rebecca Belmore,” in *Sharjah Biennial 15: Thinking Historically in the Present: Guidebook*, ed. Hoor Al Qasimi, 373.
17. Manthia Diawara quoted in, Sharjah Art Foundation, “Manthia Diawara,” in *Sharjah Biennial 15: Thinking Historically in the Present: Guidebook*, ed. Hoor Al Qasimi, 133.
18. Hinemoa Hilliard, *Mana Māori: The Art of Robyn Kahukiwa* (Auckland: Reed Publishing, 2005), 10.
19. Ibid, 15.
20. Ibid.
21. Ramari Young, ed., *Mana Tiriti: The Art of Protest and Partnership* (Wellington: City Art Gallery; Project Waitangi; Haeta Collective; Daphne Brasell Associates Press, 1991), 76.
22. Ibid, 16.
23. Ibid, 15.
24. Irihapeti Ramsden, “Cultural Safety and Nursing Education in Aotearoa and Te Waipounamu” (PhD thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, 2002).
25. Young, ed., *Mana Tiriti: The Art of Protest and Partnership*, 76.
26. Varunkia Saraf quoted in, Sharjah Art Foundation, “Varunkia Saraf,” in *Sharjah Biennial 15: Thinking Historically in the Present: Guidebook*, ed. Hoor Al Qasimi, 53.
27. Ibid.
28. Eubena Nampitjin quoted in, Sharjah Art Foundation, “Eubena Nampitjin,” in *Sharjah Biennial 15: Thinking Historically in the Present: Guidebook*, ed. Hoor Al Qasimi, 85.

## Biographies



Kahurangi Smith cites her waka as Te Arawa, Tainui, Takitimu, Horouta and Mataatua. Raised with traditional Māori values, she has a keen interest in her heritage, and the stories of her ancestors. Her work is made in digital formats including video, video games and GIFs, and is primarily installation-based. She believes the intersection of traditional perspectives and contemporary mediums has power, and that within the tension of those two positions there is opportunity to explore the potential for Indigenous voices in unlimited ways.



Robyn Kahukiwa is a leading artist of her generation, acclaimed in Aotearoa New Zealand and internationally. She is of Ngāti Porou, Ngāti Konohi, Te Whānau-a-Ruataupare, Te Whānau-a-Te-Ao, and Te Aitanga-a-Hauiti descent. Since the early 1970s, she has explored questions of heritage, identity, and sovereignty central to the Māori experience and relevant to Indigenous people around the globe. Kahukiwa has been at the forefront of artistic development in Aotearoa, working across a variety of media, including painting, drawing, print-making, and sculpture. She is also an award-winning author and illustrator. In 2020, she received Te Tohu Aroha mō Te Arikinui Dame Te Atairangikaahu | Exemplary/Supreme Award at Te Waka Toi Awards, in recognition of her status as a preeminent Māori artist. She exhibits regularly and has works in collections all over the world.



Megan Tamati-Quennell is a leading curator and writer of modern and contemporary Māori and Indigenous art, a field she has specialised in for thirty-three years. She holds the position of Curator of Modern and Contemporary Māori and Indigenous Art at Te Papa Tongarewa in Te Whanganui-a-Tara Wellington, and holds an additional position as an external curator at the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery in Ngā Motu New Plymouth. Megan is of Te Āti Awa, Ngāi Tahu and Kāti Māmoe descent. Her research interests include Māori modernism, Contemporary Māori art, international First Nations art, the intersection between global Indigenous contemporary, non-Western art and the art mainstream, and First Nations art-curatorial praxis.

