

The Artworks of Mana Whenua at Archives NZ

Archives NZ has collaborated with Ngāi Tūāhuriri / Ngāi Tahu to embed mana whenua values and aspirations within our new building in Wigram.

Notable Ngāi Tahu artist, Ross Hemera, has brought this to life in the form of eight glazed panel windows and one stand-alone piece mounted at reception. This flyer explains the designs with further detail available from Archives NZ upon request.

Nau mai, haere mai, tauti mai (welcome)

The creative interpretation of the powder-coated aluminium wall-mounted and eight glazed panel artworks is inspired by the significance of birds (ngā manu) and the importance of weaving (raranga). These two references have been used as a creative acknowledgement of the cultural objects located in the Ngāi Tūāhuriri takiwā (district). Thus the underlying concepts, synonymous with the notion of archiving, expressed in the design of the artworks are about layering, overlapping, repository, and preservation.

The references for the images and patterns have been taken from the visual and material culture found in both the Canterbury region and in other parts of Te Waipounamu (the South Island). In particular ngā tūhitihi o neherā (ancient Māori rock drawings) provide a range of figurative and abstract shapes including manu (bird) variants, tiki, whakarare (a shape used in whakairo, or carving), pora (sailing ships), ika (fish), and marine variants.

The raranga (weaving practices) of tāniko (border pattern for cloaks) and tukutuku (ornamental lattice-work) provide a range of different geometric patterns, and cultural objects. These are used throughout the glazed window artworks.

The kaupapa (basis) for the window layout of the artworks is arranged to acknowledge some of the essential aspects of cultural identity important to mana whenua (tribal authority over territory, specifically, of Ngāi Tūāhuriri). *Te Pūto o te Kāhu* - *Like the layered feathers of the hawk, so gathered together, the taonga strands are finely woven* - is the name given to the theme for this creative project. Incorporated into this theme are a number of concepts, which are expressed throughout the artworks including migration, arrival and settlement, tūrangawaewae (place to stand), whenua (land) and kāinga (home).

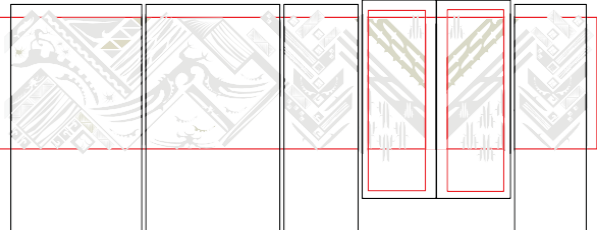


ENTRANCE

Karanga

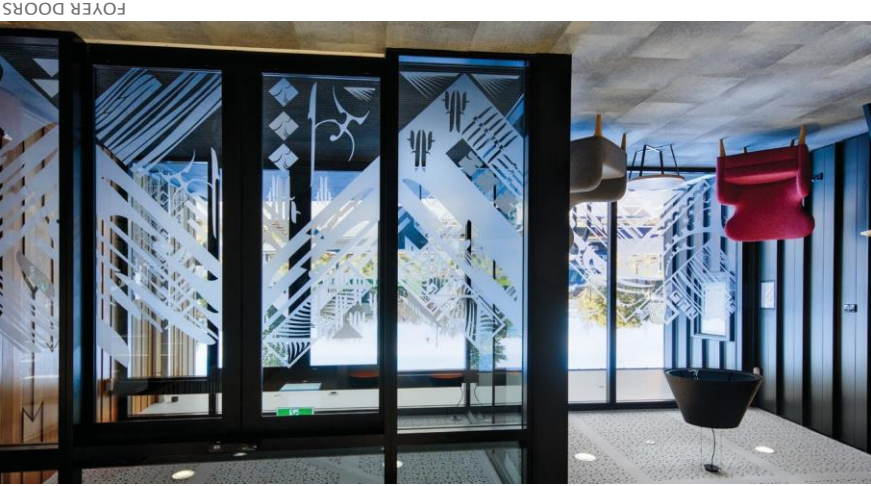
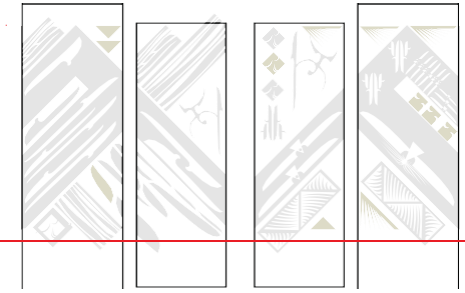
For the entrance of the whare taonga, the artwork is designed around the concept of pōwhiri (a formal welcoming ceremony).

In particular the karanga (call of welcome and reply by women, representing both the hosts and visitors) is visually represented in the moko kauae (female chin tattoo) pattern on the entrance doors.



Māmoe, Waitaha

Following on from the concept of pōwhiri, visitors make their way through the threshold of this internal doorway. It is in such locations that significant whakapapa is acknowledged and represented. The visual images expressed on this entrance are a reference to the early tribal groups of Ngāti Māmoe and of Waitaha.



FOYER DOORS

Hurunui, Te Tuhī o Ngāi Tūāhuriri



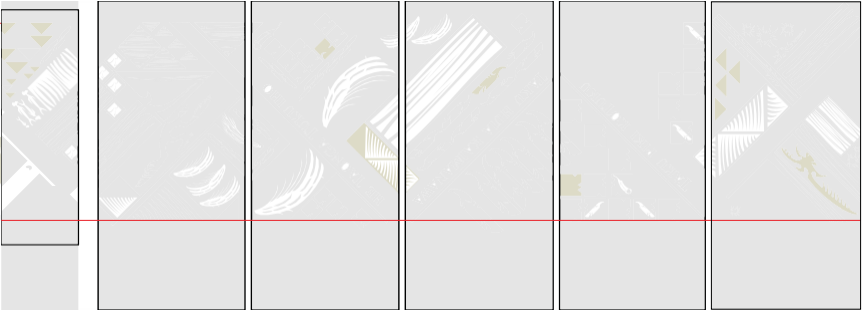
OFFICE/FOYER PANELS

In the manner of a pou tokomanawa (centre pole in a meeting house) these panels are the heart of this project. The kōrero (dialogue) represented in the artwork is an expression of the manaakitanga (hospitality and generosity) offered by Ngāi Tūāhuriri. These words reflect the significance of the archive and the importance of preserving such taonga (treasure), both for us today and for those who come after us.

'Taku piki kōtuku, taku huia kaimanawa, he taonga tuku iho'
'My treasured heron plume, my prized ornament, my treasured items passed on to the next generation.'

The significance of birds is evident as a means of illustrating the importance of such treasures. The far left panel incorporates a depiction of the kāhu or hawk. In this instance, the kāhu introduces the overarching theme for this project - **Te Pūto o te Kāhu**. As a caption it is the artist's underpinning concept of this project. It is also a means of acknowledging the mana of this creature.

Acknowledgment of Ngā Tūāhuriri as mana whenua is illustrated in the far right panel and the door panel. The far right panel is inspired by the importance of Tuahiwi marae as expressed in the proverb about a kawau (shag) sitting on a rock. The door represents the Hurunui River, which is the northern boundary of the Ngāi Tūāhuriri takiwā. An interpretation of an ika pūkanohi (a term used to describe the eyes as a defining feature of this creature), as seen in an ancient drawing from the Weka Pass rock art site, is used to illustrate the Hurunui River.



A Guide



RECEPTION

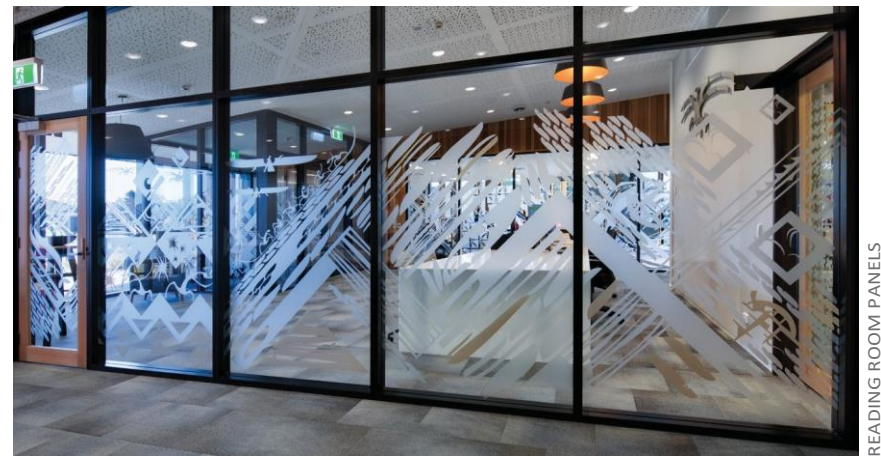
Kāhu

This sculpture is inspired by the kāhu (hawk). It makes reference to a pare (lintel). In this instance the kāhu takes on the symbolism of kaitiaki (guardian) watching over the archives in this building.

HOLD-OUT ROOM DOOR PANEL

Pīkau

The inspiration for the pattern is taken from a woven harakeke pīkau (flax backpack) found in a limestone shelter at Flock Hill. The pīkau symbolises containers that are made as repositories for our treasures.

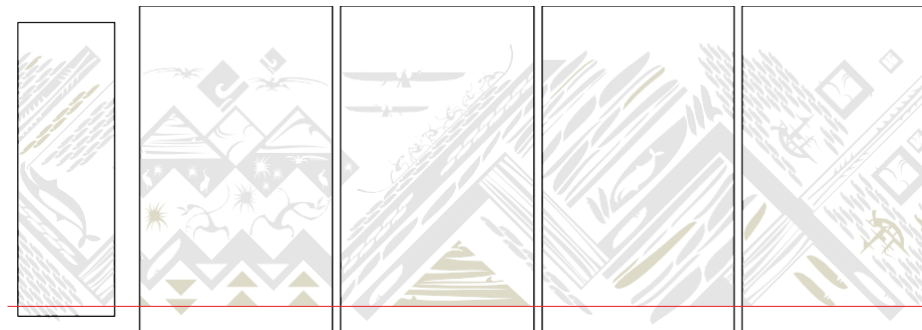


READING ROOM PANELS

Rapuwai, Ira, Wairaki, Tūmatakōkiri

Ancient iwi (tribes) and whakapapa (genealogy) have inspired the motifs and images in this artwork. The concept is based on migration stories associated with the arrival and settlement of the earliest, through to more recent ancestors. Rapuwai, Ira, Wairaki and Tūmatakōkiri tribal groups are all illustrated. Visual references are made to voyaging, anchorages, food gathering, fishing and hunting.

The door panel represents the narrative about the fish of Māui. As depicted in the next panel, mahinga kai (resources and their associated practices and places) sites were established by the early inhabitants of Te Waipounamu. The centre panel continues the theme about northern iwi crossing Te Raukawa Moana (Cook Strait) followed by the migration narrative related to the tribes of the East Coast of the North Island through the actions of a whale. The far right panel depicts two of Abel Tasman's ships at anchorage in Mohua (Wainui, Golden Bay).



ROOM 7 PANEL

Hakaterere

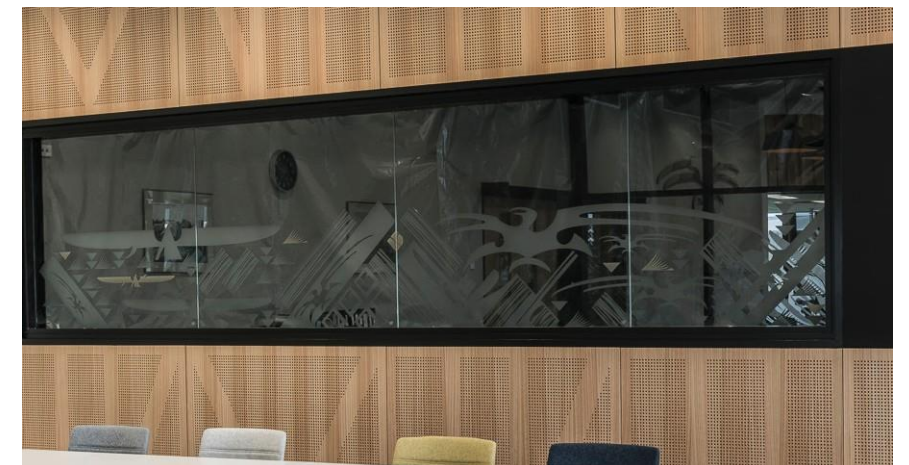
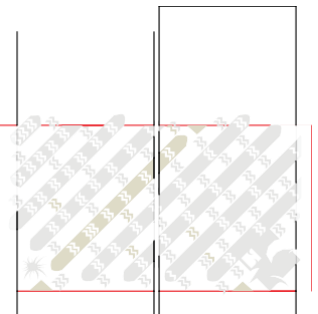
This work illustrates the Southern region of the Ngāi Tūāhuriri takiwā. The Hakaterere River and surrounding area was an important mahinga kai and resting place for early travellers. Imagery in this work represents important aspects related to food gathering and hunting. The Hakaterere was renowned as a larder with quantities of tuna, kōkopu, and inaka (fish).



FOYER WINDOW

Kākāpō (native, flightless parrot)

The inspiration for this artwork is the kākāpō. In particular the patterning on, and arrangement of the kākāpō feathers are used to create an abstract kaokao (tuku-tuku pattern) based composition. While this pattern represents the notion of strength it is also used here to illustrate the idea of gathering together. This is one of three artworks inspired by the importance of birds as models of beauty and nurturing.



DEEDS ROOM

Karera, Kākāriki

This window is a celebration of the freedom of flight. Represented are ngā manu (birds) of Ngāi Tūāhuriri flying above and surveying the land below. Birds are a symbol of elevated spiritual awareness and are the intermediaries between atua (gods, ancestors, deities) and people.

