

He kakano ahau (I am a seed)

# He kākano āhau (I am a seed)

The City of Logan boasts an extraordinarily diverse and multicultural community. Almost a third of the people living in the City were born overseas with 217 different cultures calling Logan home. People born in New Zealand represent the largest group of Logan residents from overseas and, significantly, the highest non-European ancestry is Māori.

This exhibition He kākano āhau (I am a seed), is the result of an extensive period of planning and consultation and is part of a long-term project to highlight and celebrate the various cultural influences that so richly contribute to Logan's diverse community. After meeting with local Māori community groups and elders, the team at Logan Art Gallery established three major parameters for the development of this project.

First, the exhibition was to be collectively curated by the exhibiting artists. The artists would identify themes and connections that were going to turn their individual artworks into an exhibition that represented their shared heritage. Secondly, a representative from the Māori community would coordinate the project and act as the main link

between the exhibiting artists, the local community and the team at Logan Art Gallery. Finally, it was agreed that the project would only proceed with close consultation with, and respect for, the Traditional Owners and wider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community of Logan.

At the first community meeting, the Māori elders acknowledged that although the role of project coordinator might usually be taken up by an elder, in this instance they would call for volunteers from the younger generation. Two young women, Jaime Poutapu and Amy Clarke came forward to volunteer and initially shared this responsibility. Along with welcoming her new baby to the world, Amy's role as project coordinator grew: acting as the main coordinating link between the artists, the community and the team at Logan Art Gallery, Amy has been essential to the success of this project.

The exhibition title and theme, He kākano āhau (I am a seed) derives from an ancient proverb that more recently has been used in the lyrics of a popular Māori song, He kākano āhau. The song celebrates ancestral connections and Māori culture and traditions travelling through time and over long distances. Each of the artists has addressed the theme in different ways, but each has based their artwork on traditional stories, incorporating traditional patterns and techniques with non-traditional representations and media. As contemporary artists living in Australia, they see themselves as a new chapter in the long history of their people moving and adapting to new environments, while retaining the essence of their shared ancestral history and culture.

Michael Wardell, Art Gallery Coordinator, Logan Art Gallery

Front cover Image: Onesian (Allen Vili), Te Iwa O Mata Ariki, 2018, digitally manipulated image on Perspex. Image courtesy of the artist

# Mihimai Nikora, Leona Morete, Tania Hapai Heta and the community of Logan



Ngā tamariki o Uru (The children of Uru-te-ngangana), 2018, woven harakeke (flax Formium tenox)

Many kairaranga (weavers) participated in the creation of this kākahu (cloak). As each tapawha (diamond or square) was completed and joined to another, a connection to each other as people was also created. Each pūrere kapo hau supports the other as it is joined, creating kōrero (discussion) of potential, purpose, strength and endurance.

In the creation story, when the parental gods Ranginui (the sky father) and Papatūānuku (the earth mother) were pushed apart and separated forever, their eldest child, Uru-te-ngangana (Uru), was very upset and hid himself in the deepest darkest folds of the night and wept. As the tears rolled down his face they hardened and fell at his feet as little twinkling lights that he scooped up and put into baskets. Later, his brother Tane came to find him. He asked Uru for two of his baskets to make their father happy and Tane took the baskets and as he strode across the heavens he scattered Ranginui's black cloak with millions of twinkling stars.

The story of Uru-te-ngangana was shared as part of this community work to strengthen the bond made between all those who contributed to it. The story line of isolation and abandonment after his parents' breakup is one that is understood across cultures. His hardened tears that formed into sparkling star lights and became his children delights the heart. Later, when his children were scattered across the night sky to bring a smile to his father's face, the warmth spread through the room and into each piece being woven.

Interestingly, the diamond shape is based on a particular group of stars that herald-in the appropriate harvest time of the Flounder fish and is still used today by various tribal identities whose food sources included Flounder. It is also a prominent design in the various weaving disciplines of tukutuku (latticework), tāniko (finger twining weave) and raranga (weaving) – food for the creative soul.

Just like Uru, the ability to create is in all of us. Participation in this community weaving project was high, new skills were learnt and undertaken with much eagerness. Sharing knowledge is a great way to come together for a common purpose and every person who attended was welcomed and encouraged to 'have a go', irrespective of their level of experience. Friendships were created or enhanced as fingers busily wove. People of all ages sat side by side sharing their stories and life experiences. Being creative together allowed each person the space to shine and most left feeling happy to have been able to learn a new technique, make a new friend and be a part of something bigger than themselves.

The final product – a kākahu for Ranginui skyfather was made with love, care and understanding.

## Cheremene Castle

Ngāti Paoa, Ngāti Hine, Ngāti Maniapoto, Tainui, Ngāti Porou



Ngaruru looks at the idea of protecting personal and cultural growth. We as Māori can only encourage others to join in our sharing such experiences. I have used the korowai (cloak) to portrav the protection of growth and in this sense it embraces my choices as an artist to reach goals in life, family, art and fashion. I also extend its protection as a karanga (welcome) piece for the exhibition. He kākano āhau (I am a seed) conveys growth, development and expansion. The seed, like a person has the capability to take root, develop, grow and blossom. With a modern take on my art forms. I encourage individuality to thrive and give growth to new forms of expression as Māori. but to always give recognition and respect to protocol and tikanga (correct procedure, custom, habit, lore, method, manner, rule, way, code, meaning, plan, practice, convention, protocol).

My cloak is made of individual handmade feathers sculpted to look and give the texture of real feathers. A traditional korowai (cloak) can take from six to twelve months, even years, to make with careful consideration of all elements. The korowai Ngaruru is given the same respect, with each piece formed to give balance, depth and, most importantly, recognition to its koreo (message). These cloaks are an artistic expression of korowai, telling stories of significance or histories of our Maori.

The gown is but an extension, pushing boundaries of colonisation. It is a mix; as both an artist and fashion designer I continue to grow: He kākano āhau (I am a seed). Wherever I may roam, my culture is my most cherished possession. I will allow for all forms of my art to be expressed and showcased to the world to create understanding of why our culture is important.

# **Jackie Hawkins**

### Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngāti Pahauwera, Ngāti Kere





Image left: Jackie Hawkins, *Te Ata*, 2018, acrylic on custom MDF. Image by Carl Warner Image right: Jackie Hawkins, *Te Ao*, 2018, acrylic on custom MDF. Image by Carl Warner

The basis behind the idea of my paintings is in conjunction with the retaining of our culture, mana (prestige, authority, control, power, influence, status, spiritual power) and tikanga (correct procedure, custom, habit, lore, method, manner, rule, way, code, meaning, plan, practice, convention, protocol).

Te Ao represents the male figure in traditional stance. It pertains to the Māori god of the forest, Tānemahuta, who is known as being the first of the male gods to separate his parents, and to let the first light shine through the dark, known as Te ao mārama. In my depiction, I chose to show this stance as a reflection of holding the knowledge we obtain as we venture far from our home and to retain the ngaengae (umbilical cord).

The second painting, *Te Ata*, is of a similar connection to our whenua (land) being the symbol of te kura waka (female reproductive organs). In Māori legend, this is where Hineahuone (the first woman of clay), was created by Tāne. She then proceeded to become the mother of Hinetītama (the first woman). My depiction of this relates to the origins of the female organs being the Māori's first connection to human knowledge and intelligence.

# Tania Hapai Heta

Ngāti Raukawa, Ngā Puhi, Ngāti Marutūahu, Ngāti Maniapoto, Ngāti Porou, Irish, French, Australian

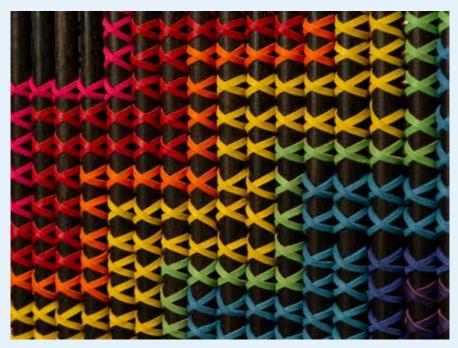


Image: Tania Hapai Heta, *E kui mā, e koro mā* (a formal greeting and acknowledgement of elders), 2018, contemporary tukutuku artwork, dowel, bamboo, stain, kangaroo leather, suede. Image by Carl Warner

Tukutuku, also known as arapaki or tuitui, is a traditional Māori art form. Full-sized panels have lined the walls of Māori communal ancestral houses in New Zealand for hundreds of years. Originally, tukutuku panels lined the walls as insulation from the elements, and later as adornment; decorations full of embedded knowledge. A tool to learn, teach and share oral traditions.

Simple geometric shapes are visual memory markers to represent a concept, story or idea. Unique symbols, patterns, and designs tell stories about the people who lived there and referenced the plants, fauna and food sources in that region. Stories of ancestors' deeds and travels and what they found, learned, and considered most valuable can be told through tukutuku art works. Also stories of genealogy, maps, history, language, song, arts; those stories that discuss the concepts and beliefs of our cultural worldview, and how the world relates to us.

This contemporary artwork hopes to show that this ancient communicative technology, a tool used by our ancestors, is still useful and relevant today. Using a nine square grid design, variations of the following patterns are included:

**Whanganui mūmū** (checkerboard design): alliances, combinations, co-operation

**Tumatakahoki** (binding stitch on outer edge and divisions): connection, togetherness

**Pātiki** (flounder fish, diamond shape): hospitality, favorable times

**Purapura whetū** (alternate squares): stars, the many, ancestors in the sky, our place in creation

**Poutama** (stairway): education, attainment, advancement, path to the heavens

**Niho Taniwha** (teeth of the monster): storyteller, historian, holder of genealogy, orator, artist

**Matariki** (star formation): the New Year, harvest, preparation, those who have passed

**Rīpeka** (cross): stars, spirit, religion **Tapatoru** (triangle): the significance of the number three, tāniko twining patterns, mountains, boats

**Kaokao** (zigzag, armpit): the warrior, preparation

As I sat to weave the stitches onto the panel, I was learning and teaching myself a story of whakapapa (genealogy) – from the kākano (seed) to the parents, grandparents and then greatgrandparents that surround them all in the eight outer squares. By the time I finished this piece, I had learnt a little something extra about each of my great-grandparents. Their names will be forever committed to my memory in the ways of old, the image of this piece in my mind. A constant reminder of them and this journey.

E kore au e ngaro, he kākano I ruia mai I Rangiātea (I will never be lost, for I am the seed sown in Rangiātea).

## Leona Morete

Ngāti Porou, Te Aitanga a Hauiti, Ngāti Konohi



Image: Leona Morete, *Pinepine te kura* (little tiny treasure), 2018, hue (gourd), harakeke (flax *Phormium tenax*), resin. Image by Logan Art Gallery

The whare tangata (womb/uterus) is a tapu (sacred space) where the living seed is implanted and the spark of life and wairua (spirit) meet its new resting place within the flesh. The human being begins to form and the heart starts beating. All the whakapapa (genealogical) links including tribal affiliations, whānau traits, abilities, gifts, likenesses and the seen and unseen are imbued in the child and, if the child's environment is favourable, these things will come forth as they journey through this world.

#### Hue (gourd)

For Māori the hue is seen as a symbol of women in shape and form and as such is a life-giving vessel, which I find most appropriate for this art piece.

The patterning and symbols on the hue pertain to the lwi (tribe) the Hapū (subtribe), the whānau (family), the male and female, the spiritual and physical. This tuber was an important plant used as a vessel to transport, store and hold water and food. Being tough, it was good for transporting over distances.

#### Harakeke (flax Phormium tenax)

This material was absolutely vital for the health and wellbeing of Māori. Used for clothing, gathering food and shelter it was also good for healing various ailments. The first European traders realised the strength of this material and goods were bartered with Māori in exchange for it. It was quite a lucrative business for all involved. If growing conditions are favourable, one species

of harakeke will grow blades that can reach ten feet high. The smaller variety average two to five feet tall. All new 'baby' leaves sprout from the inside centre of the flax plant. The baby leaf is flanked on either side by 'parent' leaves. As each new 'baby' appears, the 'parent' leaves are pushed out sidewards creating a fan-like effect. These older leaves are always harvested first. The 'baby' and the immediate 'parents' are not harvested ensuring the plant continues to regenerate. Māori liken the harakeke bush to the special protective relationship of the child with parents, grandparents and the wider whānau that is the village.

#### Resin

The hei tiki is a carved figurine symbolic of the unborn child. Made of resin, it glows in a dark, secret place to represent the spark of life that has been placed within him or her.

## Mihimai Nikora

Ki te taha o tupuna whaea, ko Te Whānau a Ruataupare toku iwi

Ki te taha o tupuna matua, ko Ngāti Maniapoto toku iwi, ko Ngāti Rora toku hapū



Image: Mihimai Nikora, *Te Toi Huarewa*, installation details, 2018, Rākau (Ironbark), pōhatu (stone), kākano (seed pods), harakeke (flax), rau (leaves), pāpākiri (bark), steel wire and Tapa (Mulberry bark). Image by Carl Warner

Poipoia te kākano kia puāwai (Nurture the seed and it will blossom)

Beneath and behind the visible, physical world, the eternal threads link me to past, present and future. As a kākano (seed) I carry those who have been and yet to come, full of potential and possibilities.

These threads also create a pathway, Te Toi Huarewa (the Suspended way) a spider's web, to the uppermost heavens or sacred knowledge.

A meeting place of: Life and death Earth and sky Night and day Physical and Spiritual The interweaving of my Whakapapa.

My work represents a physical form to share my philosophical view of life. Influenced by extremes, from a religious conditioning which created separation and a deep fear of anything Māori, to reclamation and creation of my own spirituality which aligns with Māori Spirituality, influenced by my human existence.

Te Pou Kākano: The Pou provides grounding and a focus. Planted and fixed within Papatūānuku (earth mother). Her moko kauae (chin tattoo) embodies her earthly learnings.

Whakarua kopito: The umbilical cord, which creates a connection to all life, the origin of my whakapapa (geneology).

Wairua: The two waters which flow within us. Spiritual energy creating my connection to Te Ranginui (sky father) and Papatūānuku (earth mother).

Ngā Pōhatu Whā: The four cornerstones and directions, the Pou which secured the separation of Papatūānuku and Te Ranginui. The separation, though traumatic, allowed light and therefore knowledge within the world, likewise within oneself.

Te Taura: Wire cables symbols of strength and protection, creating four triangles, representing the four dimensions of Hauora (wellbeing) for the nurturing and well-being of the kākano, Te Taha Wairua (spiritual health), Te Taha Hinengaro (mental and emotional health), Te Taha Tinana (physical health), Te Taha Whānau (family health).

Ngā Tuapuku: the suspended woven strands, Te Toi Huarewa, hanging from the heavens, symbolic of my awareness and connection to Māori spiritual knowledge, found within my reo (language), waiata (song), karakia (prayer) and trusting in my own knowing.

## Merri Randell

Waikato, Ngāti Whāwhākia, Tainui, Anglo-Australian





Touching the Mauri, 2018, HD video (with sound) duration: 8 minutes. Soundscape artist: Whaia Whaea. Edition of 5

I was born and raised in Kaniva, a small country town in Victoria, Australia. To survive and thrive I had to assimilate, identify as 'white' and deny my Māori heritage. Today I celebrate diversity and through working with other First Nations people in Australia and Peru, I became interested in discovering more about my Māori heritage.

I am fascinated by the Māori concept of 'Mauri' – the life-force within all natural things. According to the New Zealand/ Aotearoa Ministry for the Environment 'The environment is integral to Māori identity and culture. ... For Māori, all parts of the environment – animate and inanimate – are infused with Mauri (life-force) ...'. (2015, 18) My guide on a Te Puia (Rotorua) Māori cultural tour explained Mauri by laying her hand on a large rock and described the vibrations and energy she felt.

Clinical Psychologist, Forrest Green extends this idea by claiming that, '... every person has a unique vibration, frequency or soul signature'. Green theorises that, 'When you become attuned to or in resonance with your soul 'note,' you are literally in harmony with yourself and all of your surroundings, resonating within the universal harmony of all creation. ... Within this space there is a sense of peace and power and a greater capacity to 'listen and to know,' ... '. (Green in Montgomery 2008, 55)

My artwork for the *He kākano āhau* exhibition is an audio-visual installation entitled *Touching the Mauri*, which explores the First Nations' concept of time: where the past, present and

future simultaneously co-exist. My artworks depict cinematic landscapes where binaries, such as life and death, indigenous and colonial, animate and inanimate, plant and animal, and past, present and future, co-exist to promote what French philosopher Julia Kristeva describes as 'the place where meaning collapses' (1982, 2), providing opportunities for change, transformation, new understandings and growth.

Working with a soundscape created by local sacred sonic Māori healer Whaia Whaea, this artwork plunges into the void of my lost Māori identity to retrieve my First Nations voice, heal my body landscape and experience a sense of peace and harmony through resonance with my unique soul note. The journey of *Touching the Mauri* travels from Peru to Hawaii, to New Zealand and back to my home in Logan, blending magical creation story myths from a childhood in a rural Anglo Māori Australian Mormon household to fold time on itself.

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### Teraimana Tahiata

Ngāti Kahungunu, Te Aupōuri, Taputapuātea Tubuai



Mana Whenua (The honour from the land) Marlu, Muni (Kangaroo), 2018, pigment on carved and incised Gunni (Silver gum Eucalyptus crenulata)

A very distinctive animal from these lands. Protected for generations as totem guardians. Called Gangurru in Guugu-Yimidhirr dialect, the first translation, Kangaroo, was used to describe the entire species but is differently named in different dialects throughout these lands such as Marlu (in Wididjeroo), Muni (in Yugumbeh). This piece represents the mixture of tribal cultures including the natives of this land we stand on and the tribal culture of Aotearoa, The Tā Moko (facial tattoo) on the Kaitiaki (totem) is the design Puhoro which represents speed and motion as possessed by the native kangaroo. It is also representing the many unions within the two cultures that are relevant to the Tā Moko on this guardian. The many species of Gangurru protect, maintain, and survive everywhere in these lands and also serve as totems in certain regions and as quardians of the people ensuring 'Mana Whenua'.

Mate kaitiaki (Death of the guardian) Kabul (Carpet snake), 2018, pigment on carved and incised Karla Pirra (Red gum Eucalyptus camaldulensis)

The Kaitiaki or totem (guardian animal) were gifted to specific tribal areas to maintain the ecosystem in perfect balance. This piece represents a male and female Kabul (carpet snake) wrapped around a musket (rifle), the destroyer of the snake's native human guardians and their homes. Similar incidences occurred in Aotearoa with the introduction of the gun aimed at our culture.

After consultation with Jagera Elder, Aunty Kerry Charleton, she explained that the totem of this region (Jagera) is the Kabul (the carpet snake). Aunty Kerry saw in this carving the Kabul wrapping around the musket that had stolen so many lives to an unworthy death (this new method of killing was dishonourable to humans, flora and fauna). The gun was the key ingredient in the efforts to destroy the continuation of their culture. Their tribal leaders, cultural keepers and warriors were hunted and killed to maintain control both physically and psychologically.



He tohorā (Whale tail) 2018, pigment on carved and incised Gunni (Silver gum Eucalyptus crenulata)

Tere tohorā, tere tangata (Where whales go, humans follow).

Many whales guided the Tākitimu waka (canoe) from Hawaiki to Aotearoa. and the whale was seen as a Kaitiaki. (quardian). They were revered as ocean guides as well as guides to the seasons and cycles in nature. In death every single part of their body was considered Taonga (a treasured gift), the meat as well as the bones and teeth that could be made into deadly weapons and musical instruments for high ranking people. Although not as highly prized as pounamu (greenstone), it was still verv valuable to the Māori even in its raw state and could be traded for carvings. weapons or even Tā Moko (facial tattoo). He tohorā is the quardian in both life and Death.



He matau (Hook) 2018, pigment on carved and incised Ngulya (Leopard wood Flindersia maculosa)

Ma te rongo, ka mohio — ma te mohio, ka mārama (From peace comes understanding, from understanding comes enlightenment)

Ma te mārama, ka matau — ma te matau, ka ora (From enlightenment comes knowledge, from knowledge comes life)

Matau (hook), also means knowledge. This piece is about ocean life, and knowledge of astrology used in navigating our way from Hawaiki to Aotearoa. It is about surviving many journeys to and from the islands to Aotearoa using this ancient knowledge.

He Parata, 2018, pigment on carved and incised Garraanyjiga wurindaga (Silky Oak Grevillea Robusta) and Paua (shell) inlay

He aha te mea nui o te ao, he tāngata, he tāngata, he tāngata (What is the most important thing in the world? It is people, it is people, it is people)

The mask, He Parata, represents Tūmatauenga, the guardian of war, who in Māori whakapapa (genealogy), all Māori are descended from. For young Māori to study war-like skills was learning to protect their people and was also appeasing to the guardian of war, as well as their father and mother, their family, their village, their tribe and their ancestors. The two faces on the side represent the two Kaitiaki (guardians), Ira Atua, guardian of the mind and Ira Tangata, guardian of the physical body.

# Onesian (Allen Vili)

Ngāti Awa, Ngāi Tūhoe, Ngāti Hamoa



Image: Onesian (Allen Vili), *Te Iwa O Mata Ariki*, 2018, digitally manipulated image on Perspex. Image courtesy of the artist

Te Iwa o Mata Ariki is the unravelling of knowledge of self

An ongoing journey to further awareness, such is the search for greater understanding, to reach the ever-moving plates of knowledge.

The composition is laid out as a retrospective to this knowledge, similar to that you see in the Cosmic Background Radiation, everything is connected somehow in a web not so different from a kete (Māori basket) woven and layered over each other like the fabric of space-time, te kete o te wānanga (the baskets of knowledge).

The outside red hue is a depiction of our Atua, the orators to our past, ever expanding like the universe itself with the interconnectedness (hono) of our youth. The blue hue represents the strengthening of our voice and our awareness of our tīpuna (ancestors) a bond ever strong.

The kaitiaki (guardianship) are entrusted with the knowledge of Mata Ariki, stories of the stars defined from place to place, dismantled each holds essence and purpose around Mata Ariki and what it means to Māori in this current perspective.

Mata Ariki has many names (Eyes of God, Eyes of Chief, etc) and many titles to explain what it is in the pacific, though now more commonly known in modern days to Māori as the New Year.

Matariki is the Māori name given to the cluster of stars generally known as Pleiades or Seven Sisters, in Aotearoa (New Zealand). These stars can be seen from late May to early June and is the mark of the Māori New Year. For Māori traditionally Matariki was both a time to remember the past whilst planning for the future. Time spent for commemoration for those who have passed away, and also the indicator for the harvest of crops to which was a cause for much singing and celebration.

Matariki itself is prolific in the pacific region reaching the known boundaries that is Polynesia, the title itself may be slightly different in other pacific cultures, but the general translation is very similar to 'eyes of god' or 'eyes of the chief'.

### **Acknowledgments:**

Many people helped in the preparation and organisation of this exhibition: Project coordinator, Amy Clarke, and the eight exhibiting artists who put in so much extra work on top of making their individual artworks: Reuben Friend. Director of Pātaka Art + Museum. Porirua City, New Zealand, who helped with the selection of artists and to Jaime Poutapu who helped with the project coordination in the initial stages; Artists Mihimai Nikora, Leona Morete, and Tania Hapai Heta, for teaching and coordinating the community weaving project, Ngā tamariki o Uru (The children of Uru-te-ngangana), and to all the members of the community who

contributed to the weave: Tu Tawha. President of the Queensland Māori Society; Nga Mary Bartlett-Johnston and Cilla Haenga from Te Korowai Aroha Inc. and all the other members of the community who provided advice in the initial stages and helped to plan the official opening and family fun day; Louisa Bonner, Uncle Barry Watson and Aunty Kerry Charleton for advice in the initial stages, the official opening and family day: and the team at Logan Art Gallery, especially Exhibitions Officer, Sophie Chapman, who contributed enormously to the success of this project.

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#### He kākano āhau

He kākano āhau I ruia mai i Rangiātea And I can never be lost I am a seed, born of greatness Descended from a line of chiefs, He kākano āhau

Ki hea rā āu e hītekiteki ana Ka mau tonu i āhau ōku tikanga Tōku reo, tōku oho-oho, Tōku reo, tōku māpihi maurea Tōku whakakai marihi My language is my strength An ornament of grace

Ka tū ana āhau, Ka ūhia au e ōku tīpuna My pride I will show That you may know who I am I am a warrior, a survivor He mōrehu āhau

### Hohepa Tamehana (Tūhoe)

#### I am a seed

I am a seed
Scattered from Rangiatea
And I can never be lost
I am a seed, born of greatness
Descended from a line of chiefs,
I am a seed.

Wherever I may roam
I will hold fast to my traditions.
My language is my cherished possession
My language is the object of my affection
My precious adornment
My language is my strength,
An ornament of grace

Whenever I stand,
I am clothed by my ancestors
My pride I will show
That you may know who I am
I am a warrior, a survivor
I am a remnant



## He kākano āhau

(I am a seed)

19 October - 24 November 2018

#### **Logan Art Gallery**

Cnr Wembley Rd and Jacaranda Ave, Logan Central, Queensland Open 10am to 5pm, Tuesday to Saturday

logan.qld.gov.au/artgallery



