

HISTORICAL AND TECHNICAL REPORT

WHAIAO KI TE AO MARAMA

THE EMERGENCE OF LIGHT FROM THE DARKNESS

**FOWLER MUSEUM, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA (UCLA),
LOS ANGELES, USA**



**REPORT PRODUCED BY
BRENT KEREHONA PUKEPUKE-AHITAPU BA, MTeach
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KUPUTAKA/GLOSSARY

Kupu ē-kaupapa/Term

Aho

Aho poka (also known as Tīhoi)

Aotearoa

Haerenga

Hapū

Harakeke

Hītori

Iwi

Kaihaka

Kairaranga

Kaitaka

Kaitiaki

Kaiwhakairo

Kākahu

Kapahaka

Kaumātua

Kaupapa

Kawa

Kuia

Māori

Māoritanga

Marama

Paru

Poi

Pūrākau

Mātauranga

Rangahau

Whakamāramatanga/Definition

Horizontal or weft threads

Additional aho, shaping inserts, which create contouring for a closer fit i.e. custom fit

Māori name for New Zealand

Journey

Sub-tribe

Phormium tenax or New Zealand Flax

History

Tribe

Dancer/Performer

Weaver

Finely woven cloak with decorative borders or panels, down the side edges or lower edge

Guardian or protector

Carver

Generic term for cloaks

Cultural performance

Respected elders

Framework of the garment

Protocols of practice, how things are done (see also tīkanga)

Female elder

Indigenous peoples of Aotearoa New Zealand

Māori cultural lifestyle

Moon

A black ferruginous mud used in the dyeing process

A ball on the end of a woven string, used by women in cultural performance, and to keep their wrists supple for weaving.

Stories, oral history

Traditional knowledge

Research

Rangatira	Chief or chiefly in nature
Tāniko	Decorative border, either traditionally woven with dyed harakeke, or contemporary with wool
Taonga	Cultural treasure or artefact
Taura	Cord
Te Ao Māori	The Māori world or Māori worldview
Tikanga	Correct procedure or custom (see kawa)
Tohunga	Respected expert in a field
Tūpuna	Ancestors
Uri	Descendants
Wahine/Wāhine	Woman/Women
Waitae	Dye or pigment
Whakanakonako	Embellishments
Whakapapa	Genealogy
Whakatauki	Proverb
Whanau/Whanaunga	Relative/s
Whatu	Hand-twining technique
Whenu	Vertical or warp threads
Whetu/Nga Whetu	Star/Stars
Whiri	Plait/plaiting
Whitau/Muka	Extracted harakeke fibre

KUPU WHAKATAKI/PREFACE

‘Ko te manu e kai ana i te miro nōnā te ngahere, ko te manu e kai ana i te mātauranga nōnā te ao.’

‘The forest belongs to the bird who feasts on the miro berry, the world belongs to the bird who feasts on education.’
Māori Whakatauki/Proverb

The *whakapapa* and *hītori* of *taonga*, or the provenance and history of cultural treasures, are as important as the items themselves. Whenever the term *taonga* is used within this report, the author is referring to cultural treasures, although Western practice usually refers to them simply as objects or artefacts.

Mātauranga (knowledge) of who the *kairaranga* (weaver) or the *kaiwhakairo* (carver) was, the *iwi* (tribe) or *hapū* (subtribe) from which they affiliate, the identity of the receiver, and the reasons for the gifting – are also *taonga* and unfortunately, far too much of this information has been lost to time.

Countless Māori *taonga* rest in institutions around the world, museums, galleries, libraries, and private collections, and although the author does not take issue with this as such; he does feel that far too many *taonga* are displayed, or held, without an appropriate level of cultural and historical context. After visiting several museums in Europe, the United States of America, Australia, and the United Kingdom, the author noticed that several of our *taonga* had either minimal information; no cultural context, or worse, some information panels bore the terms ‘Unknown’ or ‘Unidentified’ and the name of the collector or collection was more prominent than the *taonga* itself.

As a weaver, a novice carver, and a Māori historian, the author felt that he was able to examine select *taonga* from institutions in countries to which he travels and produce documents that would provide these institutions with a general level of historical and technical information. The author has been fortunate to have undertaken extensive international travel, for work, research, and holidays, and has recently begun integrating museum and gallery visits into these trips; contacting institutions prior to any of his *haerenga* (journeys), to ascertain what *taonga* they have, and what he might want to access and examine – or what they would like to know more about.

By no means does he claim to be an expert in the study of Māori *taonga* and feels that there are others of greater standing within the field; however, he offers his knowledge, as best as he is able, to produce research documents that provide substantially more information than is currently held on these specific *taonga*.

The compilation and provision of these reports serve several purposes: a) to do the *taonga* justice by visiting and spending time with them, b) to examine them and promote their whereabouts, and making their locations known to Māori (and other interested persons), and c) to uncover their *pūrākau* (stories) and bring them back to life. This third practice of uncovering their *pūrākau* achieves several outcomes, these being: a) to reunite them with *uri* (descendants) and *whanaunga* (relatives), b) to provide the institutions with a credible and informative record of the respective *taonga*, and c) ensuring their stories are not forgotten – ka maumahara tonu tātou kia rātou.

This particular *pūrākau* (story) tells of the inspiration and the creation process behind this particular *taonga*, a *poi tāniko*, and the purpose of this being a companion and a *kaitiaki* (guardian) to the *kaitaka* (X65.8014) and how it was gifted to the *kaitaka* by a weaver from Te Whakatōhea to keep it company.

HAURONGO/BIOGRAPHY



The author delivers a lecture at the University of Sydney; examining a *taonga* in the Auckland Museum; signing one of a set of historical *He Tohu* books in which the author's research was used; and being interviewed at an ANZAC Dawn Service in Wellington.

The author's cultural background sees him affiliated with the *iwi* (tribes) of Ngāpuhi, Ngai Tūhoe, Te Whakatōhea, and Te Whānau-ā-Apanui, as well as having connections to Alveston in Gloucestershire, Bloomsbury in London, and Helsingborg in Sweden – all of which he has visited.

He is ex-military, having served in the army as a paratrooper and then military police officer; before studying a Bachelor of Arts, and then a Master of Teaching degree, and becoming a history teacher, and a military and Māori historian.

The author is a cultural practitioner: *kairaranga* (weaver), novice *kaiwhakairo* (carver), and *kaihaka* (performer).

He is a published author, producing articles, reports, and story books; produced a historical short film; delivered lectures around the world; and contributed towards exhibitions in institutions in Aotearoa New Zealand, and Australia.

The author's research has been referred to in the media; mentioned in legal cases; used on government websites; presented in museums; stopped the sale of *taonga* at auction and assisted in the repatriation of *taonga* back to Aotearoa New Zealand.

He has also appeared on television and radio in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia, as a *tumu kōrero* (historian), in documentaries, news, and cultural programs.

The author is a husband, father, and grandfather, who believes in the importance of teaching his *whanau* (family) *mātauranga* and *toi Māori* and including them in his *kaupapa rangahau* (research projects); taking them with him on these *haerenga* (journeys) if the opportunities allow.

It is his goal to contribute toward *Māoritanga* and *Te Ao Māori* (The Māori World) in a positive and impactful manner and hopes that this report goes some way towards achieving this objective.

ARA RANGAHAU/RESEARCH METHODOLOGY



The *kairaranga* (weaver), Tangimoe Clay, holding her creation.
Photograph courtesy of the author (2024).

This report was compiled by the author, after interviewing the *kairaranga* (weaver), Tangimoe Clay, a member of the Te Whakatōhea *iwi* (tribe); as well as carrying out a physical examination of the *poi* itself. The physical examinations of the artefact were undertaken at the Fowler Museum, UCLA, between 11th-12th July 2024.

Documentation, provided by the Fowler Museum, UCLA, during the research process, consisted of the *Temporary Receipt – Incoming* form. Information from, and images of these documents, are provided by permission of the weaver, the author, and the Fowler Museum. All physical descriptions, including measurements, and any damage, were obtained during the author's examination of the *taonga*.

Thanks, and acknowledgment goes to the following people and institutions for their support and assistance: Tangimoe Clay – *Kairaranga* (weaver); Dr Toiroa Williams – Te Whakatōhea *Tohunga* (academic); Maui Hudson – Te Whakatōhea Local Contexts Strategic Advisor; Fowler Museum, UCLA: Silvia Forni – Director; Rachel Raynor - Director of Registration and Collections Management; Isabella Kelly-Ramirez – Collection Manager; and Carlee Forbes – Mellon Curatorial Fellow.

Pūrongo Kōrero o nehe

Historical Report

Tahūhū Kōrero – Background Story:

In July 2023, the author, his wife, and three teenage grandchildren visited the Fowler Museum, at the University of California (UCLA), where they viewed and examined a *kaitaka* (highly ornate hand-woven Māori cloak) which is believed to have originated from the Te Whakatōhea *rohe* (region) in the Bay of Plenty, Te Ika-a-Maui (The North Island) of Aotearoa (New Zealand).

After identifying this *taonga* as having a connection with one of his *iwi* (tribes), the author committed to returning to conduct further research, with the intent to produce a historical and technical report focussing on it. The author contacted *Kairaranga* (weaver) Tangimoe Clay (who was also affiliated with Te Whakatōhea) and they began planning a visit to the Fowler Museum the following year; where a detailed examination would be undertaken, as a collaborative *iwi* (tribal) *kaupapa* (project).

Tangimoe decided that she would weave a traditional *poi tāniko*, which would be gifted to the *kākahu* as an eternal companion; to accompany the *kākahu* at all times, whether that be in storage or on display in an exhibition.

The following dates (10th-12th July 2024) were confirmed with the relevant staff from the Fowler Museum, and a few weeks prior to our *haerenga* (journey) it was decided that our delegation would add another member, Maui Hudson; the Whakatōhea Local Contexts Strategic Advisor who had recently negotiated the Te Whakatōhea Waitangi Treaty settlement process with the New Zealand Government.

This *poi tāniko* was created in early July 2024, at the *Tangata Whenua Gallery*, Ōpōtiki, Aotearoa, New Zealand, and a *karakia* (blessing) was done by Dr Toiroa Williams, a *tohunga* (academic) from Te Whakatōhea.

Our delegation arrived in Los Angeles on 8th July, and the *poi tāniko* was subsequently gifted to the *kaitaka* on the 10th July, which was the first day of our examination window; where Maui gave a *karakia* (prayer) and a *mihi* (welcome) to the *kaitaka*, and Tangimoe placed the *poi tāniko* alongside this *taonga*.

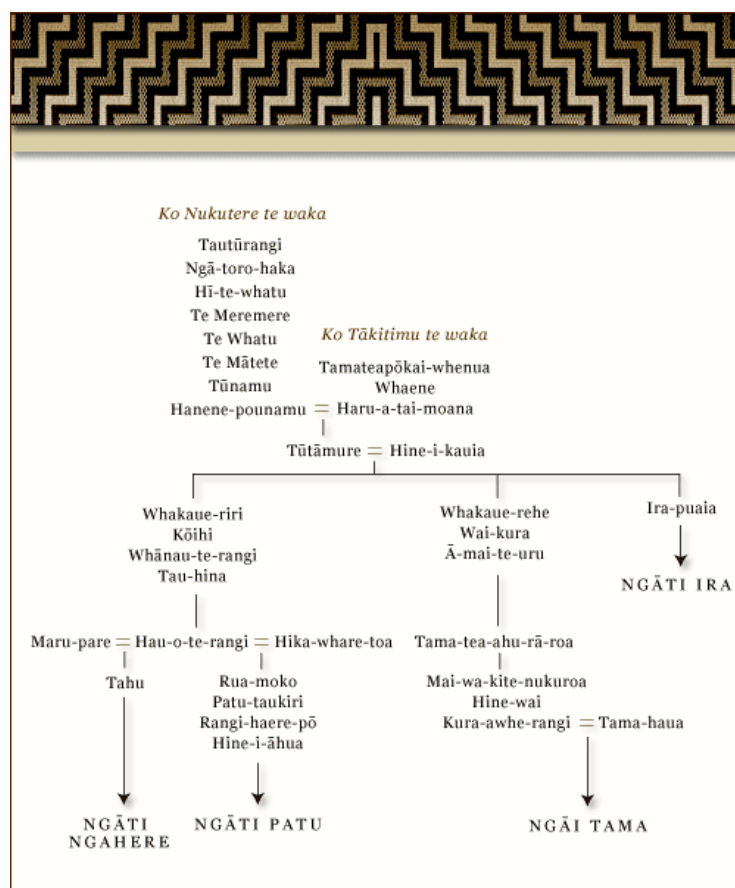
This *poi* has been named *Whaiao ki te ao Marama*, which means *Emerging from the darkness to the World of Light* and is adorned with *ngā whetū* (stars) that represent both the illumination of this *kaitaka* for the people of Te Whakatōhea, and to coincide with *Matariki* (Māori New Year) which was happening at the time of the creation of the *poi tāniko*.

The *poi tāniko* has been gifted to the *kaitaka* both as a companion and also as a symbol that Te Whakatōhea has visited and acknowledged this *taonga*; claiming a cultural and spiritual connection with this *taonga*.

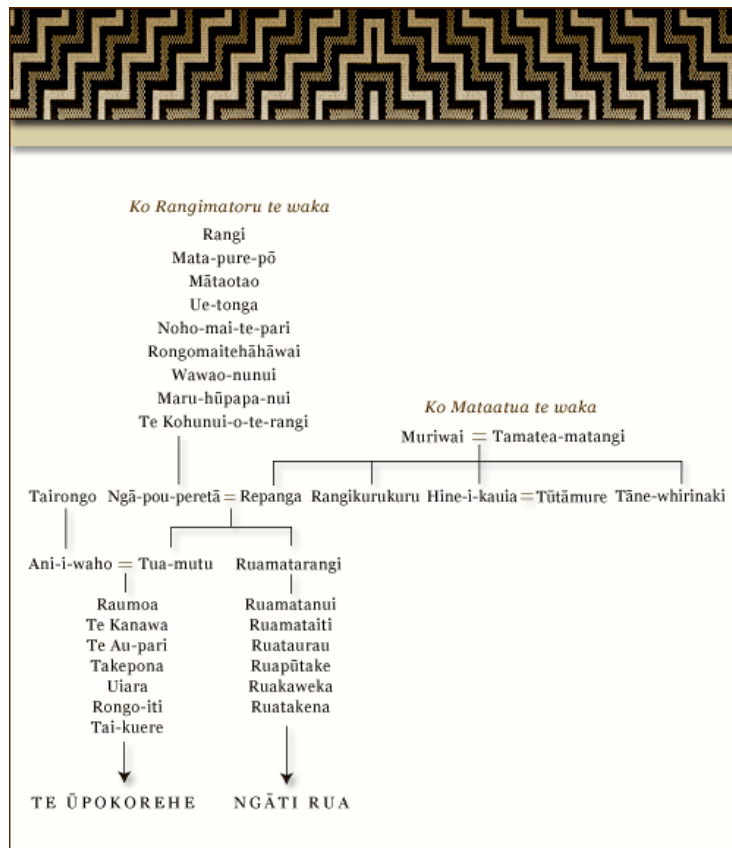
An agreement has been reached between the weaver Tangimoe Clay, the Te Whakatōhea *iwi*, and the Fowler Museum, that the *poi* will remain with the *kākahu* indefinitely; being stored or exhibited with each other, for perpetuity. This will ensure that the *kākahu* is never alone and allows for a positive and respectful relationship to be built and maintained between Te Whakatōhea and the Fowler Museum.

This *poi tāniko* originates from the township of Ōpōtiki, in the Bay of Plenty, Te Ika a Maui (The North Island), Aotearoa New Zealand. The town takes its name from the longer, Ōpōtiki-mai-tawhiti; which refers to the *puna* (spring) above Waiotahi Beach. These are the ancestral lands of the Te Whakatōhea *Iwi* (tribe), including the Ngāti Iraⁱ, Ngāti Ngāhere, Ngāti Ruatakena, Ngāti Patumoana, Ngāi Tamahaua, and currently in contention, Te Ūpokorehe, hapū (subtribes).

The people of Te Whakatōhea, trace their *whakapapa* (genealogy) through those who arrived on the Mātaatua *waka* (canoe) with notable *tupuna* (ancestors) being: Toroa, Puhī, and Muriwai; the Nukutere *waka* captained by Tautūrangi, which arrived nine generations earlier; and possibly the Te Arautauta *waka* captained by Tarawa and his brother Tuwharanui, which arrived during the Great Migration from Hawaiiki.



Whakapapa (genealogy) chart showing the descent of Ngāti Ngāhere, Ngāti Patumoana, Ngāi Tamahaua, and Ngāti Irapuia *hapū* to the Nukutere *waka*.ⁱⁱ



Whakapapa (genealogy) chart showing the descent of Ngati Ruatakana and Te Ūpokorehe *hapū*, from the Mātaatua *waka*..ⁱⁱⁱ



Images of *pou* (carved posts) that depict the arrival in the area by the Arautauta and Te Tohorā *waka* (canoes), and the later arrival of European settlers..^{iv} Photos courtesy of Shirley Williams.

The boundaries of the Te Whakatōhea *rohe* (area) cover over a 35-km stretch of coastline in the eastern Bay of Plenty, from Ōhiwa Harbour to Ōpape. The western boundary is Maraetōtara at Ōhope, and the eastern boundary is at Tarakeha, a fortified ridge pā between Ōpape and Awaawakino. The coastal boundaries run inland, southeast through mountainous country, and join just south of Matawai.



Map of Te Whakatōhea lands, spanning from Maraetōtara to the West, Tarakeha to the East, and Matawai to the South.^v



The important Te Whakatōhea ancestor, Tūtāmure, occupied several pā including one on this pyramid-shaped hill, Mākeo, which stands behind the Ōmarumutu marae.^{vi}



The Ōpōtiki Mai Tawhiti *puna* (spring) on Tangimoe's property in Waiotahe.
Photograph courtesy of Tangimoe Clay (2024).

Pūrongo Kupu ā-kaupapa

Technical Report

Taipitopito whakamātau/Examination details

Examination Dates: 11th-12th July 2024

Staff and researchers present at the examination

Silvia Forni - Director, Isabella Kelly-Ramirez - Collections Manager, Brent Kerehona Pukepuke-Ahitapu – Author, Tangimoe Clay – weaver, and Maui Hudson – Te Whakatōhea Local Contexts and Strategic Advisor.

Kaitaonga/Accession details

L2024.9.1

The *poi* was gifted to the *kākahu* on Wednesday, 10th July, where it was placed with the *taonga* on a table in the *Center for the Study of Regional Dress*. It was officially accepted into the Fowler's collections on Friday, 12th July, when documentation was signed by Tangimoe Clay, Brent Kerehona Pukepuke-Ahitapu, and Rachel Raynor – Director of Registration and Collection Management.



The newly woven *poi* creates a striking contrast against the aged and browning *kaupapa* of the *kākahu*.

Momo Taonga/Type of cultural treasure

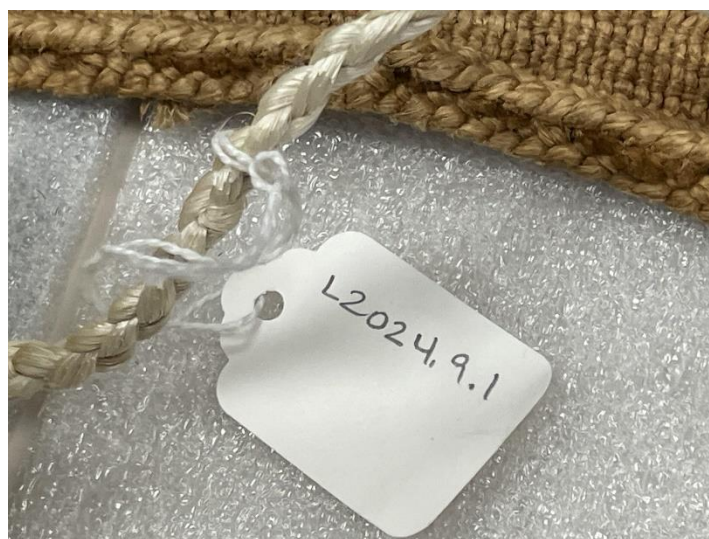
This *taonga* is a traditional-style *poi tāniko*, which is used in *kapahaka* (cultural) performances and usually by *wāhine* (women), and there are both long and short *poi*. Those used in performances today are, unfortunately, contemporary versions created from tissue paper, plastic bags, and woollen thread.



The Ōpōtiki Mai Tawhiti *kapahaka roopu* (cultural performing group) performing with *poi* at the 2024 Te Matatini Kapahaka Nationals.^{vii}

Pinetohu/Labels or tags

The *poi* has a small cardboard label attached to the *taura* (plaited cord) by cotton string. The accession reference is written on this tag in black ink.



The accession reference given to this *taonga* at the time of handover.

Whakaahuatanga/Description

This *poi* is a traditionally woven *taonga*, created using the *whatu raranga* technique, namely *tāniko*. The *whitau* (extracted *Phormium tenax* fibre) is quite light, appearing almost white in contrast to the vivid yellow designs which have been woven into the *kaupapa* (framework). The *whenu* and *aho* are quite fine, and this gives the surface of the *poi tāniko* an aesthetically appealing texture. There is a strip of yellow *whitau* which runs through the *pompom* at the end of the *taura* (plaited cord).



These two images show the *poi tāniko* during their construction, with the head of the *poi* now taking shape.



The *poi* head now clearly displaying its curvature, as it begins to taper back inward toward the bottom.

Meiha/Dimensions

The circumference of the *poi tāniko* head measures approximately 280 mm, and the height of the *poi* head measures approximately 80 mm. The fringe where the *taura* (plaited cord) is affixed to the body of the *poi* measures approximately 40 mm in length. The overall length of the *poi* is 450 mm. The *taura* measures approximately 370 mm from the point where it is affixed to the body of the *poi* to the end of the pompom. The circumference around the small bulb which comprises the pompom measures approximately 25 mm, whilst the length of the pompom measures approximately 140 mm in length.

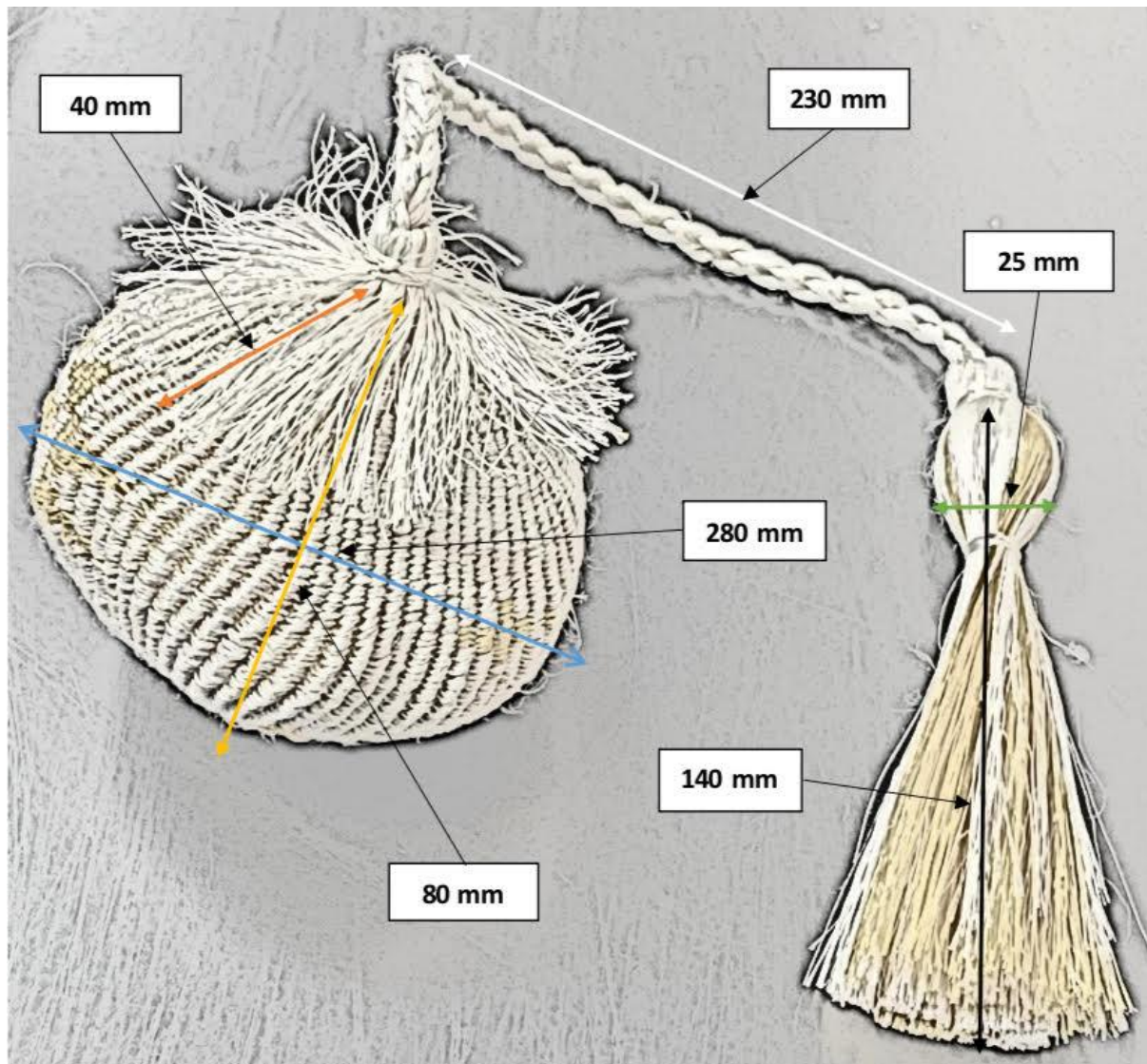


Diagram depicting the dimensions of the *taonga*.

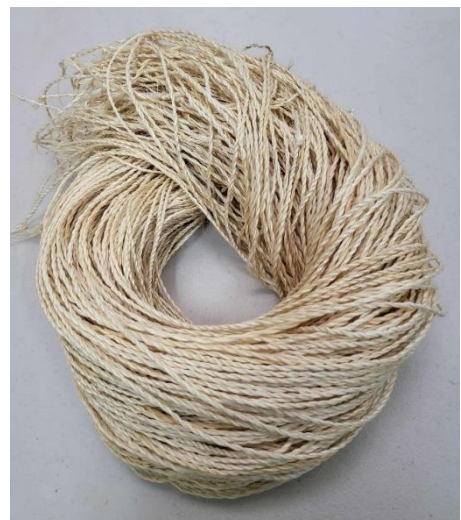
Toimaha/Weight: 60.9 grams

The *poi tāniko* was placed in a small plastic container, which had previously been placed on the scales and zeroed.



Rauemi/Materials

Whitau (whenu, aho), and *Manono* (*Coprosma grandifolia*) dye.



Tangimoe extracts *whitau* from *harakeke* showing the clean, fine fibres, and fully extracted *whitau* fibre which has been *miro* (rolled), ready to weave.^{viii}

Tāniko/Decorative patterns

The designs depicted on the *poi tāniko* are *ngā whetū* (stars) and are representative of both the illumination of the *poi tāniko* as a companion to the *kākahu* in the darkness of the storage facilities, as well as the traditional celebrations of *Matariki* or the Māori New Year.

There are two large eight-pointed stars, and seven smaller four-pointed stars woven into the *kaupapa* of the *poi tāniko*.



Taura/Cord

The *taura* comprises of a four-ply *whiri* (plaited) *whitau* fibres, 230 mm in length from the head of the *poi* and the beginning of the *pompom*; and the length of the *pompom* is 140 mm.



Waitae/Dye

It appears that the only pigment used is sourced from the bark of the *Manono* tree (*Coprosma grandifolia* - *Rubiaceae*), which presents as a yellow colour.



Foliage of (*Coprosma grandifolia*) - Manono (Aotearoa). Manono/Raurekau bark.



Manono/Raureka dye.^{ix}

Whakanakonako/Embellishments

There is a fringe where the *taura* is attached to the *poi tāniko*, which serves as an aesthetic element to the *taonga*. This fringe measures approximately 40 mm in length. There is also a yellow strip of *whitau* fibres in the pompom which the author considers an embellishment.



Pakarutanga/Condition

As this is a newly created *taonga*, there is no damage recorded yet, and as there is no *paru*-based dye (which is known to degrade fibre over extended periods of time), this *poi tāniko* is expected to remain in pristine condition for decades, if not centuries – if it is stored in climate-controlled museum conditions.

Whakamātakitaki Pūwhenua rānei/Display or Storage

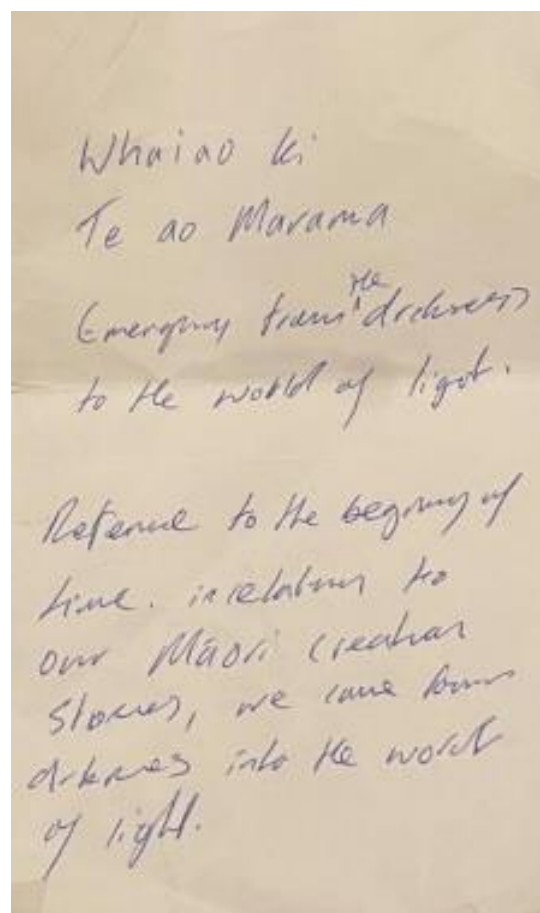
The *poi tāniko* will be stored with the *kaitaka* in a set of metal drawers, amongst many other *kākahu*. This is in a climate-controlled storage room.

Ngā tuhinga a te kairaranga/Notes by weaver

‘The invitation to come and look at this spectacular Whakatōhea *kaitaka* came from Brent Kerehona. Brent briefed me on the recorded history. My immediate response was to make a gift, as I would when visiting my *kuia* after a very long time. My intention was to weave this gift to lay with our *kaitaka* permanently so she would never be alone again. I decided on a small *poi tāniko* that was in keeping with the *tāniko* work on the *kaitaka*. Over a period of a week, I prepared and wove a *poi* from *whitau*, the fibre from the flax. Using natural *whitau* and dyed Manano, a yellow natural dye. I chose the Matariki patterns as it was *Matariki* during the time of making it. *Matariki* is the special occasion in the New Zealand calendar which marks the start of the Māori New Year. I chose light colours on the head of the *poi* representing *marama* (the moon). There have been countless moons, since we, the *mokopuna* (grandchildren) of Whakatōhea have seen our *kuia kaitaka*. Once the *poi* was finished, I was thrilled when my nephew Dr Toiroa Williams called in and blessed our *poi*. Whaiao ki tea o Marama. Emerging from the darkness to the world of light. With the making, naming and blessing complete we were ready to leave Aotearoa.’ - Na Tangimoe



The author and his wife, Delise, examining the *kākahu*, and sharing the *kaitaka* with Tangimoe over FaceTime Messenger in July 2023.



The inspiration of a name, and the blessing by Dr Toiroa Williams.
Images courtesy of Tangimoe Clay 2024.

‘Whaiao ki Te ao Marama Emerging from the darkness to the world of light. Reference to the beginning of time, in relation to our Māori creation stories, we came from darkness into the world of light.’

Tiakanga/Preservation

It is museum practice to preserve artefacts, however, only so much can be done with finite resources (funding and specialist personnel); which are measured against museum priorities i.e. historical significance, rarity, or whether they are expected to be exhibited in the future. *Taonga* (cultural treasures) like these were never intended to last forever and were exchanged and re-gifted numerous times until the end of their lifespan.

How do we ensure that this *poi tāniko* and its associated history lives on? This can be achieved by ensuring that this *taonga* is digitally recorded, and records created (this technical report is an example); because at some point, physical preservation and restoration efforts will no longer be possible.

Whakapapa/Provenance

This *poi tāniko* was woven in Ōpōtiki, Aotearoa New Zealand, by Tangimoe Clay, between 1st – 4th July 2024. It was brought to Los Angeles by Tangimoe on Monday, 8th July, via Nadi, Fiji, where she had a layover. The *poi* was gifted to the *kāhahu* at the Fowler Museum, UCLA, on Wednesday, 10th July; placed on the table (by Maui Hudson) alongside the *kāhahu* which was in the Center for the Study of Cultural Dress over the period of 10th-12th July.



Documentation was signed by Rachel Raynor – Director of Registration and Collections Management, Tangimoe Clay, and Brent Kerehona Pukepuke-Ahitapu, and the *poi tāniko* was tagged with an accession reference and subsequently entered into the Fowler Museum's collections; to be stored, and displayed with the *kaitaka* at all times.



Rārangi pukapuka/Bibliography-End notes

ⁱ Ngati Irapuaia.

ⁱⁱ Ranginui Walker, 'Te Whakatōhea - Ancestors', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/whakapapa/3683/nukutere-canoe-genealogical-charts> (accessed 5 May 2023).

ⁱⁱⁱ Ranginui Walker, 'Te Whakatōhea - Ancestors', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/whakapapa/382/mataatua-canoe-genealogical-chart> (accessed 5 May 2023).

^{iv} Ranginui Walker, 'Te Whakatōhea - Ancestors', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/artwork/2437/tangata-whenua-pou> (accessed 5 May 2023).

^v Map. Te Whakatōhea tribal area. *Te Ara: The Encyclopedia of New Zealand*. <https://teara.govt.nz/files/m379enz.jpg> (accessed 4 May 2023).

^{vi} Ranginui Walker, 'Te Whakatōhea - Ancestors', Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/photograph/384/makeo> (accessed 18 November 2024)

^{vii} Opotiki Mai tawhiti mataatua regional 2024. Ruka Edwards YouTube. This *roopu* name is inspired by the name of the *puna* (spring) in Waiotaha. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d2VKNjw5pIE> (accessed 26 August 2024).

^{viii} Photograph courtesy of Tangimoe Clay (2024).

^{ix} Photograph courtesy of Tangimoe Clay (2024).

Tūtohu/Sign off

Ingoa/Name: Brent Kerehona Pukepuke-Ahitapu BA, MTeach
Researcher | Author | Weaver.

Tohu/Signature: _____

Rā/Date: 19th November 2024