

Te Ara a Tāwhaki

What is Māori Art?

What is Art?

Art can be thought of as a composition that is intended to evoke an emotional response.

Composition: The act of combining parts or elements to form a whole

Intent: Meaning, significance or ambition

Evoke: To call up; cause to appear; to evoke a spirit from the dead

On the next slides are a range of images that have been selected to evoke an emotional response.

Consider the following:

- What is your initial response to the image?
- Does the additional text influence your response?



Brian Jungen, *The Evening Redness in the West*, 2006 (installation detail)
reconfigured leather chair, softballs, baseballs, wood, cork, plastic,
DVD player, amplifier, electrical cables and sound
photo: SITE Photography
courtesy Catriona Jeffries, Vancouver, courtesy of the Hammer Museum.

Brian Jungen transforms familiar consumer goods into unexpected objects that question globalisation, pop culture, museums, and the commodification of Indigenous culture.

['Brian Jungen at the Hammer Museum'](#), Casey Kaplan Gallery

What is Māori Art?



Aimee Ratana, *Tūhoe*, 2008

c-type photographic print

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of the Patrons of the
Auckland Art Gallery, 2019

image courtesy of the artist © Aimee Ratana



Fiona Pardington, *Inanga Pounamu (Greenstone) Heitiki Y6521*, 2003
gelatin silver print
Chartwell Collection
Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, 2003

A Cultural Response

If art evokes an emotional response, can Māori art evoke a cultural response?

- IHI: the wow factor
- WEHI: an emotional response
- WANA: the influence that resonates afterwards

Three categories of Māori art:

- Customary
- Trans-customary
- Contemporary

Customary

Customary equates with traditional – a work you can identify immediately with Māori culture.

Look at the illustrations on the following pages. These traditional forms are items symbolic of ancestors or deities. Where would you find these distinct forms of Indigenous art?

Oratory and song are traditional artistic expressions that are coded with cultural values and tribal narratives.

Kapa haka is also considered a form of artistic expression.



Unknown artist, *Hei tiki*, date unknown
Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of Sir George Grey, 1887
on loan to Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira



Unknown carver (North Island), *Wakahuia* (treasure box), 1750–1850
wood

Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, purchased 2004

These are obvious forms fashioned from natural materials.

Trans-customary

Trans-customary Māori art is works in which a change can be seen in the forms taken from the culture.

Can you identify the changes that have been adapted from Māori art in the works that follow?



Kereama Taepa, *Pākatī Sonic*, 2018

3D printed white polymide
courtesy of the artist

[‘Pākatī Sonic’](#), Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki



Reuben Paterson, *The Kaiahuwhenua and his Three Sons*, 2001

glitter dust on canvas

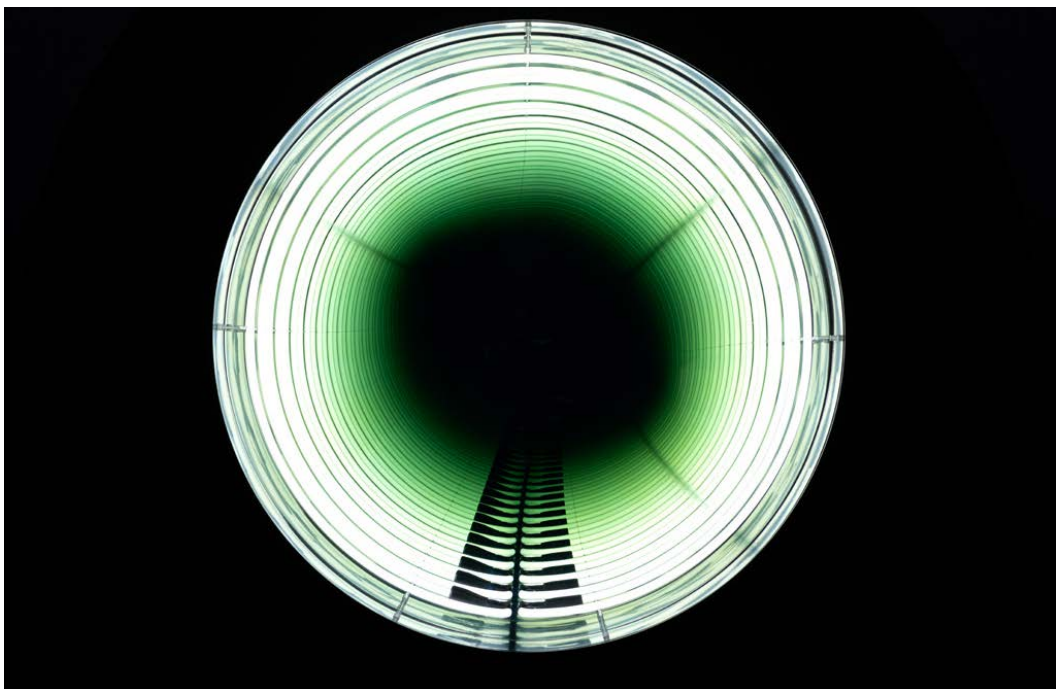
Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 2001

['The Kaiahuwhenua and his Three Sons'](#), Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

Contemporary

Contemporary Māori art has no direct visual reference back to traditional culture. What creates the resonance with Māori culture is the fact that the work is centred on things Māori.

Can you think of a reason why the following works are considered Māori art?



Robert Jahnke, *Whenua Kore*, 2019

lacquer, mild steel, powder coated aluminium, neon, mirror pane, mirror, laminated glass, toughened glass, electrical components

Chartwell Collection

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 2019

[‘Whenua Kore’](#), Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki



Michael Parekōwhai, *Kapa Haka (Pākākā)*, 2003
 automotive paint on fibreglass
 Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of the Patrons of the
 Auckland Art Gallery, 2004

[‘Kapa Haka \(Pākākā\)’](#), Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki



Hemi Macgregor, *Agent Provocateur #1*, 2012
aluminum, wood, paint
courtesy of the artist

['Agent Provocateur #1'](#), Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

If it looks Māori, can it still be considered Māori art?

Analyse the following works:



Steve Nesbit (Powerhouse Tattoo), *Kirituhi*, 2012
tattoo pigment on human skin

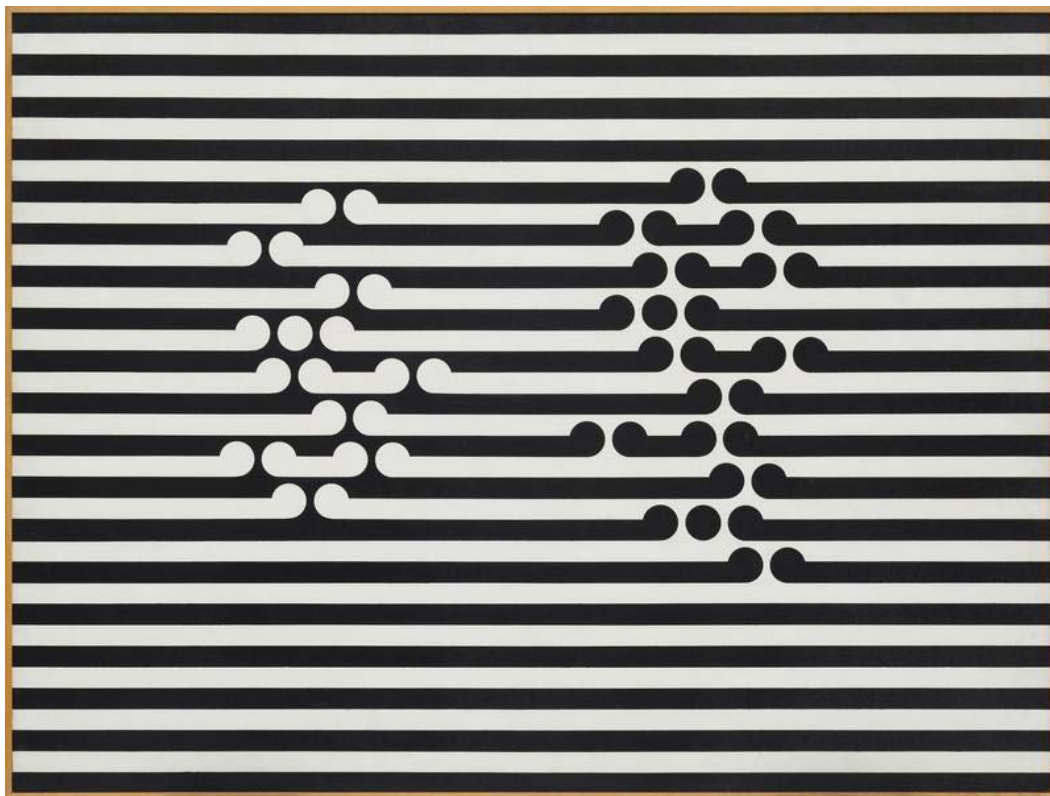
What can be misinterpreted as being authentic Māori art?



Dick Frizzell, *Miki to Tiki Tu Meke*, 1995

lithograph print on paper
image courtesy of the artist

Who has the licence to rework and augment traditional Māori forms and motifs?



Gordon Walters, *Painting No. 1*, 1965

PVA on hardboard

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 1966



Neil Dawson, *Whare*, 2010
powder-coated and screen-printed stainless steel
courtesy of the artist



[‘Auckland artist who painted two Māori women without their consent withdraws portraits from public sale’](#), 1News

Consider the issues around misappropriation and consent to personal imagery.