

Hollie Tuhimareikura Tawhiao

Artist | Whakairo | Sculpture | Installation | Curatorial Practice

Ngāti Tipa, Ngāti Naho, Ngāti Ruamahue | Kirikiriroa, Aotearoa New Zealand | hollietawhiao.com

Profile

Hollie Tawhiao is a contemporary Māori artist working across whakairo, sculpture, installation, painting and object-based practice. Her work brings together whakapapa, material knowledge, place, humour and contemporary cultural experience, with a particular interest in how customary knowledge can remain active, adaptive and relevant within the present.

Alongside her studio practice, Tawhiao has worked extensively across curatorial, museum, gallery, research and Māori collections environments. This experience informs an approach to making that considers not only the final artwork, but its cultural context, material life, relationships, installation and long-term care.

Her guiding position is simple: “My tūpuna gave me tools, not rules.” Her practice explores how inherited tools can support new forms, new voices and new ways of carrying knowledge forward.

Selected Major Projects

2026 — Te Tuarongo

Wharenuī, Waikato mental health and addictions facility, Kirikiriroa

Architectural artwork incorporating whakairo, timber construction, painted surfaces and digitally fabricated elements. Developed as part of a collaborative wharenuī project centred on restoration, healing, whakapapa and place.

2024 — Pan-Tiki

Hamilton–Chengdu Friendship Walk, Tianfu, Chengdu, China

Large-scale public sculpture developed for an international civic and cultural exchange between Kirikiriroa Hamilton and Chengdu. The coloured steel work combines tiki and panda references within a deliberately playful hybrid form.

2023 — Rangiriri Wharepuni

Rangiriri, Waikato

Whakairo and architectural work developed within a site carrying significant Waikato histories.

2022 — Wharenuī Harikoa

Auckland / Waikato

Collaborative wharenuī project and associated wānanga.

2016 — Taupiri Marae

Taupiri, Waikato

Whakairo undertaken as part of a larger marae project.

Selected Exhibitions

2025 Complex Simplicity — Solo exhibition, ArtsPost, Kirikiriroa

2025 E Hoki Mai Nei ki te Ūkaipō — Te Kōputu a te Whanga a Toi | Whakatāne Art Gallery, Whakatāne

2024 E Hoki Mai Nei ki te Ūkaipō — University of Waikato, Kirikiriroa

2024 Whānau Exhibition — Tawhiao Art Salon, Auckland

2024 Pūnanga Pohewa: Waka of Dreams — Nelson

2024 Adam Portraiture Award — New Zealand Portrait Gallery, Wellington

2024 Pan-Tiki — Chengdu, China
2024 Hāpai Te Hauora Auahitūroa Campaign — Rotorua
2024 New Zealand Painting and Printmaking Award — ArtsPost, Kirikiriroa
2023 Rangahau: He Maimai Aroha nā Tāwhiao — Te Pūkenga, Kirikiriroa
2023 Tūrama: Illuminating Matariki — Papakura Museum, Auckland
2023 Mahia te Mahi — Ramp Gallery, Kirikiriroa
2023 Toi o te Tau Hou — Nancy Caiger Gallery, Kirikiriroa
2023 Carving Inroads — Te Kotahitanga Marae, Tūākau
2022 Creative Acts of Kindness — Creative Waikato, Kirikiriroa
2022 Waiora — ArtsPost, Kirikiriroa
2021 Kotahitanga: United Through Creativity — GAPA Gallery, Kirikiriroa
2020 Kiingi Tuheitia Portraiture Award — New Zealand Portrait Gallery, Wellington

Selected Curatorial Practice

2025 Picture Books, Artistic Hooks: Drawing Children into the Art World
2024 New Zealand Painting and Printmaking Award
2023 Operation Grapple: We Were There
2023 Tūrama: Illuminating Matariki
2021 Te Aho Mutunga Kore: The Eternal Thread — Lissy and Rudi Robinson-Cole
2020 Kotahitanga

Writing & Research

2024 “Weaving Potentialities and AI: Patterns are not Inscriptions”
2024 Poem Atlas: An Anthology of Indigenous Visual Poetry — creative research publication, United Kingdom
2021 “E hina e! E Hine e!” — exhibition review, Museum Worlds, Vol. 09
2020 Kotahitanga: E kore teenei whakaoranga e huri ki tua aku mokopuna
2020 Arataki ACT App — research and development of 100+ pūrākau, pakiwaitara and audio scripts
2020 University of Waikato Art Sculpture Trail — research and interpretive scripts

Selected Wānanga, Workshops & Hui

2024 - 2026 Wāhine Whakairo Wānanga — Te Tuhi, Auckland (multiple wānanga)
2023 - 2024 Kōruru Carving Workshops — Waikato Museum, Kirikiriroa
2024 Māori Curator Hui — Te Wānanga o Aotearoa, Te Awamutu
2023 Māori Curator Hui — Ranana Marae, Whanganui
2023 Te Ātinga Hui — Kōkiri Marae, Te Kōpua
2022 Uhi Workshop — Te Kauae Marae, Hangatiki
2022 Toi is Rongoā Symposium — Waikato Museum
2022 Wharenui Harikoa Wānanga — Auckland
2022 Wāhine Kaiwhakairo Wānanga — Te Kauae Marae, Hangatiki

Education

2025 Diploma in Te Tohu Paetahi — University of Waikato

2023 Master of Contemporary Arts, Distinction — WINTEC | Te Pūkenga

2021 Certificate in Project Management, Level 4 — UCOL

2018 Postgraduate Diploma in Museum Studies, Distinction — Massey University

2011 Bachelor of Fine Arts (Honours) — Elam School of Fine Arts

Languages

Te reo Māori — Conversational and continuing to develop proficiency.

English — Fluent.

Selected Professional Experience

2022–Present — Kaitiaki Mātangireia

Te Iho o Te Manawataki | University of Waikato

Leadership across Māori and Indigenous collections, cultural description, provenance, digitisation, access, community relationships and long-term stewardship.

2021–2022 — RAMP Gallery Manager

WINTEC | Te Pūkenga

Exhibition development, touring projects, installation, artist liaison and gallery operations.

2020 — Curator, Kotahitanga Exhibition

University of Waikato

Exhibition research, narrative development, stakeholder engagement and installation oversight.

2020–2021 — Project Manager & Researcher

Arataki Systems

Development of pūrākau, pakiwaitara and interpretive resources for digital and place-based projects.