



Te Whare Taonga o te Tairāwhiti | Tairāwhiti Museum

HE KARERE PĀPĀHO | MEDIA RELEASE

13 Hēpetema 2019 | 13 September 2019

In Te Tairāwhiti, the arts flourished...
"Ka tipu te whaihanga ki Te Tairāwhiti..."

Treasured Māori artefacts that left our shores 250 years ago will return home this month to form the foundation of the exhibition, *Tū te Whaihanga: a recognition of creative genius*.

The development of *Tū te Whaihanga* has been led by Hei Kanohi Ora Governance Group which comprises of Tūranganui-a-Kiwa mana whenua and Te Aitanga a Hauiti and has been developed in partnership with Tairāwhiti Museum.

With the exhibition opening now just three weeks away the 37 taonga to return are in the final stages of preparation for their long journey.

Hei Kanohi Ora have selected a small contingent, a husband and wife duo, to embark on a 24,000 kilometre journey to England, tasked with ensuring the safe return of our taonga.

"Tū Te Whaihanga has been in the making for at least nine years. This is a legacy project where we hope to establish and develop good relationships with the current kaitiaki of our taonga," said Huia Pihema, chair of the Hei Kanohi Ora Governance Group.

"This is a huge project where taonga, created by our tipuna, can be brought home to their tūrangawaewae. We want our people to have the opportunity to

tangi to our taonga, to consider our tipuna whom we lost during that time and to possibly help with healing the hurts of 250 years.”

Trustee of Te Runanga o Turanganui, Te Aitanga a Mahaki Trust and Parihimanihi Marae, Huia and husband Joe Pihema have been delegated the responsibility to undertake the necessary rituals and required tikanga as kaitiaki of our taonga on behalf of Tūranganui a Kiwa.

Former Tairāwhiti Museum Deputy Director and curator, Joe Pihema says it is a privilege to accompany his wife and also support the iwi to escort the taonga back to Aotearoa.

“My focus will be to support the tikanga requirements in and around the taonga to ensure their cultural integrity is maintained.”

Pihema says it is also a lovely opportunity to work alongside his wife on a kaupapa which means so much to her, her people and the wider community.

Hei Kanohi Ora is delighted to be working with Māori-owned television production company Pango Productions to document the journey of the taonga and the people involved, from the museums in England, to Tairāwhiti Museum.

Having collective camera, editing, production and direction experience, Huia and Joe are familiar with all requirements of this kaupapa from tikanga, to museology, to the wonderful world of media and film.

The exhibition Tū te Whaihanga will be on at Tairāwhiti Museum from October 7, 2019 - October 11, 2020.

Everyone is welcome to attend the public opening on 7 October 2019 which will commence with a pōhiri in Kelvin Park (adjacent to Tairāwhiti Museum) at 10am.

For more information about Tū te Whaihanga see <https://tairawhitimuseum.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/TTW-Media-Release.pdf> or contact Eloise Wallace, eloisewallace@tairawhitimuseum.org.nz, 06 867 3832

Image 1 attached: *Huia and Joe Pihema*