



Te Whare Taonga o te Tairāwhiti | Tairāwhiti Museum

HE KARERE PĀPĀHO | MEDIA RELEASE

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

The exhibition *Tū te Whaihanga: a recognition of creative genius*, at Tairāwhiti Museum has been extended until May 2021.

The exhibition, which opened on 7 October 2019, the 250th anniversary of first on-shore contact between Europeans and tangata whenua in Tūranganui-a-Kiwa, was initially planned to run for one year.

“Tūranganui a Kiwa and Te Aitanga a Hauiti iwi are elated that our taonga will remain with their people, on their whenua for a little longer yet. *Tū Te Whaihanga* has and will continue to acknowledge, honour and commemorate the creative genius of our tipuna of 250 years ago and longer.” Hei Kanohi Ora Chairperson, Huia Pihema

“Tairāwhiti Museum staff have been in close contact with lending museums in the UK and Germany throughout the year as the impacts of Covid-19 have been felt here in New Zealand and in Europe. Because of the restrictions on international travel and the ongoing impact of the pandemic on museum operations, everyone felt that it was safest and best for the taonga to remain here in Tairāwhiti.” – Eloise Wallace, Tairāwhiti Museum Director

Tairāwhiti Museum has had strong visitation from domestic tourists over winter and spring with a 135% increase from June – September compared to 2019 and a smaller increase in visitors from Tairāwhiti over the same period.

“We are so pleased to have the taonga stay here at the museum longer, particularly as Covid-19 restrictions have had an impact on our ability to host school groups, and hold tours and events over

much of the year. Now we are at Level 1, and hopefully will remain so over the summer, it gives people visiting our region this summer a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see taonga at home in New Zealand, that you'd normally only be able to see in Europe." – Eloise Wallace, Tairāwhiti Museum Director

Tū te Whaihanga: a recognition of creative genius includes 37 taonga which until their return last year, had resided in Europe for 250 years.

"The mauri of these taonga have been revitalised and reinvigorated as the multitude of descendants have bestowed upon these precious taonga their own ihi, wehi, mauri and aroha." Hei Kanohi Ora Chairperson, Huia Pihema

The Endeavour sailed the coast of Tairāwhiti for a month on its first voyage to New Zealand, and during that time there were numerous encounters with tangata whenua of Tūranganui-a-Kiwa and Te Aitanga-a-Hauti on land and at sea. Taonga in the exhibition include eight painted hoe paddles, traded at sea off Whareongaonga (south of Tūranganui-a-Kiwa) on October 12, 1769, and *Te Pou pou o Hinematiore* from her whare on Te Pourewa Island on October 28, 1769. Other taonga include rākau (weapons), kākahu (cloaks), tātua (belts), whakairo (carvings) and adornments.

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

"The return of our taonga has in no small way allowed our whāriki of tipuna kōrero to grow and enhance the way that we care and share in the betterment of our tamariki and mokopuna, and our community as a whole. *Tū Te Whaihanga*, and our very own Tairāwhiti Museum, has opened doors to places of immeasurable potential" Nick Tupara, Hei Kanohi governance group member

The New Zealand government has agreed to extend their support to the exhibition through the government indemnity scheme, which helps reduce the cost of insurance for international exhibitions visiting New Zealand, based on the principle of accessibility. This project was a notable first for the scheme as the first occasion it supported New Zealanders' access to indigenous taonga returning home, rather than to overseas cultural material.

The project has been supported by Trust Tairāwhiti, Te Puna Tahua Lottery Grants Board and Air New Zealand.

The taonga in the exhibition are on loan from The British Museum; Pitt Rivers Museum University of Oxford; University of Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology; Great North Museum: Hancock and Tübingen University Museum, Germany.

Entry to Tairāwhiti Museum is free for Tairāwhiti residents, Friends of the Museum and Children 12 and under, and \$5 for adults.

For more information or to arrange an interview please contact
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