

waka kuaka

The Journal of the Polynesian Society

VOLUME 133 No. 1, MARCH 2024

SPECIAL ISSUE:

in a room, in a house, on an island, in an ocean



The Polynesian Society

Waipapa Taumata Rau | The University of Auckland, New Zealand



Jimmy Ma'ia'i, *Fa'alautaliga*, reclaimed ifilele (kwila), garden twine, 2021.

USO 4 LIFE (2021): EXPLORING MEMORY AND SELF-IDENTITY THROUGH INSTALLATION ART

JIMMY MA'IA'I

Tāmaki Paenga Hira | Auckland War Memorial Museum

ABSTRACT: Among Aotearoa New Zealand's Pacific diaspora, contemporary discussions of culture and identity are highly complex and multifaceted. Through postcolonial theoretical standpoints and creative outputs, many Pacific artists have sought to explore and express these complex discussions in order to further understand themselves in a postcolonial setting. Having mixed-heritage ancestry can compound this complexity, adding multiple contexts to already multiplicitous discussions. This article contextualises components from the author's body of work *Uso 4 Life*, an art installation conceived from formative memories and experiences pertinent to the development of the artist's identity as a mixed-heritage Samoan. It also explores how installation practices can be used as a basis for such investigation.

Keywords: *Tusi'upu Sāmoa*, mixed heritage, identity, 'afakasi, diaspora, Pacific art, fa'asāmoa, installation art, sculpture

VAILELE

I remember a trip to Sāmoa with my mum, dad and sister, where we stayed with my grandfather at his house in Vailele. He was working on his dictionary, *Tusi'upu Sāmoa* (2010), at the time. My grandfather's house was more like a fale pālāgi (European-styled house) than a traditional fale (house). A diamond-mesh fence surrounded the house to keep the dogs at bay, a slingshot at the ready as a further security measure. The property at Vailele was dense with tropical vegetation and planted crops: sugar cane, pineapple, coconuts, breadfruit, kūmara (sweet potato). We spent a day working in the garden, where I was given a sapelu (machete) to chop down a small tree. I watched my grandfather strike this tree with precision and intent, reminding me of my dad's abilities with the sapelu back home. Our sapelu in Auckland (Fig. 1) has a homemade handle that, even as an adult, is too big for me to use comfortably. It is bound with green insulation tape, a homage to my grandfather's homemade adze, which was bound with thin green twine. The experience of using the sapelu made me "feel Samoan". Perhaps it was because my grandfather had entrusted me with his sapelu, or even something to do with being a young boy doing feau (chores) to help

his grandfather. In any case, it was a feeling that resonated with me as a half-Scottish, half-Samoan child, blissfully unaware of the complex histories of the generations before me.

Experience and memory have shaped the development of my Samoan identity and represent the core of my body of work *Uso 4 Life*. This body of work was a response to the research question: How can the complexities of intergenerational, mixed-heritage Samoan identities be represented through installation practice? *Uso 4 Life* examined the external and internal factors that have contributed to the development of my personal cultural self-identification. It aimed to speak to and celebrate the broader community of mixed-heritage Samoans living in Auckland, including the ways this identity has been shaped and, indeed, changed through intergenerational



Figure 1. Dad's sapelu, 2021. All images are the author's.

experiences. Using autoethnographic, practice-led research methods, this installation-based creative practice and corresponding research work in unison to express the multiplicities and unique nature of Pacific self-identity.

‘O LE ‘ĀMATAGA

(THE BEGINNING)

Uso 4 Life centred on recounting and exploring the process of ethnic and cultural self-identification through the development of my own Samoan identity and the broader contexts within which this development has taken place. I recounted and unpacked formative memories foundational to my Samoan identity and expressed them through a variety of creative and artistic modes. In this sense, it was memory-based and autoethnographic.

The secondary objectives of this project sought to explore the environmental, political, social, economic and historical factors that contributed to the formation of my own identity specifically, as well as complex Pacific identities more broadly. I examined these concepts within geographic and conceptual postcolonial contexts, the former determined by Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand, as city in a settler colonial state—the place where I was born and raised—and the latter as the theoretical and conceptual lens through which to understand the long and complex history of this city, its Samoan inhabitants and the cultural expression and identity formation therein. Indeed, Auckland is often referred to as the world's largest Polynesian city; it is a city where Pacific people are demographically considerable, and thus it is receptive to, and reflective of, Pacific culture. However, the history behind this demographic presence and cultural expression and its often vexed contemporary state is still fraught. Damon Salesa's (2017) concepts surrounding segregation, cultural marginalisation, deprivation and economic neglect are key to capturing this nuance both in my surrounding research and in my creative outputs.

The installation *Uso 4 Life* intended to echo these concepts by converting the exhibition space into a segregated site, a partitioned area where culture, in the form of sculptural artefacts, is “flourishing”. These artefacts were composed of various media, including glass, ceramic, plastic and reclaimed wood, with each artefact responding to the research question in various ways.

Examining the various subcultural phenomena in which Auckland's Samoan communities engage proved to be a wellspring of inspiration. This examination influenced many of my artefacts and the conceptual framework upon which my research was based. Food, for example, is an indicator of the ethnographic landscape of a particular suburb. If these suburbs have a large Pacific population, you will likely find a number of takeaways and dairies offering an array of Pacific delicacies. Most of the dairies in Avondale—the suburb in Auckland where I live—stock a variety of taro, pisupo (canned

goods) and some frozen meats like *povi māsimā* (corned beef). While not all of these vendors are from the Pacific islands, they satisfy the demand of the area's inhabitants.

Car culture is another example of cultural adaptation in Auckland. On one of my visits to Sāmoa as a child, I noticed that the car scene was uniquely Samoan. The iconic buses were adorned with airbrushed murals and bright paint jobs, Christmas lights illuminated the cars at night, and limousine spoilers were affixed to their boots. Although it has been some time since I have been able to visit Sāmoa, I believe the car scene amongst Auckland's Samoan communities stems from the car culture in Sāmoa and has been adapted to reflect the accessibility of cars, parts and modifications available here. This adaptation is echoed throughout the many facets of Samoan life in Auckland and exemplifies the resilience of their inherent cultural structures.

A SEGREGATED SITE

A common misconception, critiqued by Lana Lopesi (2018), is that Auckland city is “the largest Polynesian city in the world”; in reality, the majority (53.4%) of the city's Pacific population is concentrated in South Auckland (Stats NZ 2020). The significance of this—as the site for the exploration, construction and performance of Samoan diasporic identities—was critical to this project. This claim about Auckland is often rolled out during the many Pacific language weeks, Polyfest (the annual secondary school performing arts festival) or the city's Pasifika Festival. More evidence of this performative inclusivity is demonstrated in marketing campaigns, government publications and television advertisements that feature deeply cultural symbols, smiling Pacific faces and Pacific motifs.

Though this claim may be demographically and statistically accurate, with two-thirds of New Zealand's Pacific population residing in Auckland and considering that one in four babies born in Auckland are of Pacific descent, the sound-bite utilisation of this statistic obscures the lived realities of many Pacific people. Indeed, this statement signals that our Pacific communities are celebrated, nurtured and meaningfully included in society. However, as Damon Salesa (2017) states, South Auckland is a “city within a city”, a condensed “Polynesian city” and a segregated city that is split into “ethnoburbs”. The Pacific neighbourhoods or ethnoburbs “are highly likely to experience ‘extreme concentration’ and deprivation” (p. 22, quoting Poulsen and Forrest 2008: 237). This combination of marginalisation, concentration and deprivation forced South Auckland's inhabitants to find alternative, often creative, means of cultural expression, representation and income. This community's resilience and resourcefulness have led to the establishment of cultural and creative hubs where the cultures of our diaspora have been able to prosper. So, while Pacific cultures may be able to flourish in Auckland, this is largely self-made and is born from the experience of segregation and marginalisation.

These findings have relevance for the experiences of children of Samoan immigrants living in Auckland, as they reveal that societal marginalisation, practices of assimilation and the condensing of Pacific populations into ethnoburbs often result in social, economic, cultural and political deprivation. Pacific communities have used this very segregation, through cultural strengthening and communal resilience, to manifest and nurture their self-determined cultural hubs. Thus, in sites such as South Auckland, immigrant communities have made major efforts to preserve their cultural identities, culminating in forms of political resistance. Auckland is, therefore, a necessary site to interrogate the construction, negotiation and performance of diverse, diasporic Samoan identities, through which modes of political resistance are expressed and must be attended to.

WHO'S REAL?

"There are no true interpreters or sacred guardians of any culture. We are all entitled to our truths, insights, and intuitions into and interpretations of our cultures."—Mauaiaivao Albert Wendt (1976: 54)

A common experience, and a constant discussion throughout my research, was that of the children of Samoan migrants being referred to as "fia pālāgi" (Franklin 2003; McGrath 2002). The term *fia pālāgi* literally means someone who wants to be *pālāgi* (European): a person of Samoan descent who may have little to no ability to speak the Samoan language and limited knowledge of *fa'asāmoa* (Samoan culture). This may be by choice (someone of Samoan descent who rejects their Samoan identity in an attempt to "pass" as European) or due to a perceived lack of cultural competency (someone of Samoan descent who identifies with their Samoan background but does not carry the cultural skills that the broader Samoan community may expect them to hold).

My father's experience with this tension saw *pālāgi* racism directed towards him as a Samoan and New Zealand-born Samoans labelling him as *fia pālāgi* or an *'afakasi*—a term used to describe someone of mixed Samoan ethnicity. The term *'afakasi* has derogatory connotations, denoting someone with mixed heritage as being lesser or genealogically inferior to those with "full" Samoan heritage. For him, he was neither "European enough" nor "Samoan enough". His experiences, however, are necessarily understood as distinct from those of his father, who was born to two Samoan parents in Sāmoa, was a *matāi* (head of a family; titled person), spoke Samoan and was able to meet the cultural, political and societal expectations of a Samoan elder. From an autoethnographic perspective, my experiences, particularly throughout my childhood, were different still. I was welcomed by both my Samoan and *pālāgi* classmates and peers. Samoan parents were intrigued to find out just how Samoan I was and would ask, "O ai lou igoa?" (What is your name?). To my Samoan friends, I was their *uso* (brother). In contrast,

pālāgi parents showed little interest, an opposite reaction to the perplexed responses my father encountered. These experiences—and the distinctive social, political, economic and cultural contexts that shape them—give rise to nuanced processes of constructing and expressing Samoan diasporic identities. These processes parallel the versatility of fa‘asāmoa and have particular relevance for the children of mixed-heritage Samoans, whose grasp and performance of fa‘asāmoa has adapted (and continues to adapt) to the needs of a new and constantly changing environment.

Fa‘asāmoa is, to many Samoans, an inherent way of being, one which holds courtesy, politeness and respect at its core and can be seen to function “as a basis of identity and solidarity” (Keddell 2006: 50). It is foundational to Samoans in Sāmoa and is also a symbolic and performed connection to Sāmoa for those estranged from their homeland. My great-aunt, Aiono Dr. Fanaafi Le Tagaloa (Aiono 1986), observes that the foundations of fa‘asāmoa rest on sociocentric values stemming from the fa‘amatāi system, a system of chiefs that structure and organise Samoan society and social relations. Many island-born Samoans see fa‘asāmoa as the identifier of a “real” Samoan—a signifier of cultural authenticity—and may denounce those who cannot speak the language and perform fa‘asāmoa adequately as being lesser, or *fia pālāgi*, an *‘afakasi*. April Henderson (2016: 319) states that

while Samoan language ability remains a critically important arbiter of authenticity for those who are themselves fluent (Hunkin-Tuiletufuga 2000), can this continue to be the case for numerous diaspora-raised Samoans—and even some raised in Apia or Pago Pago—who may no longer speak Samoan? There are indications that those with minimal Samoan language competence may believe they can still be “100% Samoan” regardless of language ability (Wilson 2010).

This notion of being “100% Samoan” not only is a product of colonial scientific racism and associated theories of blood quantum but is also a profoundly non-Pacific way of conceiving of genealogy and relationality. It also ignores the complexities that shape the processes of identity construction in the diaspora (Suaalii-Sauni 2012). Such conceptions deny the “right of people to self-define their ethnicity, including being able to claim more than one” (Keddell 2006: 46). Keddell highlights the multiplicitous nature of mixed-heritage identity by acknowledging the individual’s decision to define their identity and/or ethnicity on their own terms. This decision, especially for the Samoan diaspora, is influenced by “the dynamics of social interactions and external conditions that influence the constructs of peoples’ lived realities” (Leafe 2017: i).

It is from these concepts surrounding cultural legitimacy that many of my decisions pertaining to materials arise. For example, the frequent use of

plastics within my work is a signifier of fakeness—the “not-real”. Yet the usage of such materials is also an act of ownership, celebration, humour and, ultimately, acceptance. By pairing the plastic with organic materials related to cultural memory and cultural performance, I explore a symbolic and tangible synthesis between the “real” and the “fake”—the Samoan and the non-Samoan.

POST(?)COLONIAL

Questions and explorations of identity, cultural expression, dislocation and reclamation have become central aspects of diasporic Pacific communities. Though this has been a lived experience that exists as a personal and internal navigation for Pacific people, the late twentieth century saw this exploration introduced to academic institutions, art galleries, theatres, bookshops and political spaces. Facilitated by a wave of newly educated and enfranchised Pacific activists, academics, authors and artists, Pacific communities crafted new channels to articulate their experiences of culture and identity. I use these early articulations as the theoretical foundation for my artistic practice.

Counter-critiques, like those offered by subaltern and postcolonial studies and their postcolonial theories and theorists, have provided a vocabulary for expressing diasporic Pacific experiences. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1994), with her focus on positionality, reclamation of space and reorientation of personnel, enabled minority communities to speak back to institutions that had long suppressed them and their communities’ voices. Frantz Fanon (1961) explored the impacts of the dehumanisation and subjugation of colonised communities central to colonial objectives, enabling settler colonial and once-colonised communities to reflect on how these newfound realities have affected their pasts. Edward Said’s (1978) consideration of the process of “othering” as a Western-constructed term to facilitate homogenisation, oppression and colonisation provided a lens through which to rethink dominant narratives that depict Europe (and, by extension, the West) as the benchmark, thus enabling more realistic global representations.

With its roots in South Asia and the Americas, however, postcolonial theory can often overlook the particularities of the Island Pacific and associated diasporic communities, despite the region’s experiences resonating with the realities of their peers in other parts of the Global South. Fundamentally, this work finds resonance with a more region-specific intellectual tradition that, though conversant with the principles of postcolonial thought, considers and applies the specificities of the Pacific experience.

In 1970, Ratu Mara, the first Fijian prime minister, presented an address to the United Nations General Assembly in which he coined the term “the Pacific Way” (later published as the title of his memoir; Mara 1997). This term referred to the transition of the many Pacific Islands from colonisation to independence (Lawson 2010). The Pacific Way became the basis for

anticolonial discourse throughout the Pacific, from which a postcolonial Pacific political identity was formed. This burgeoning sense of “Pacifitness” gave these Island nations the impetus to self-define their postcolonial, political and cultural identities. Bernard Narokobi’s *Melanesian Way* (1983) similarly offered a pathway towards a more nuanced self-identity, socially, culturally, geographically or politically, for the western Pacific.

Thought leaders such as Epeli Hau’ofa (2008a) similarly championed the task of reevaluating the hegemonic Western discourse that presented Pacific islands as tiny islands in a far-flung ocean, devoid of land mass and thus devoid of power. Instead, he presented a Pacific-centred place- and people-based system that insisted that the Pacific region is an ocean state whose strengths lie in the vast ocean space and the interconnections therein. Others, such as Teresia Teaiwa (2016), have used their academic and artistic platforms to articulate this ocean-centric notion and contribute to this decolonial recalibration. Teaiwa’s oft-cited prose, “We sweat and cry salt water, so we know that the ocean is really in our blood” (quoted in Hau’ofa 2008b: 41), speaks to the longevity of the Pacific ontological frame. Indeed, Indigenous Pacific ontologies represented by Pacific postcolonial thought existed long before Western involvement and colonisation of the region, and because of resilient communities and thinkers like Mara and Narokobi, these have endured.

Importantly, however, this process of recalibration, reclamation and decolonial practice—characteristics found in my work—is an ongoing collective project. Indeed, and as Wendt (1976) reiterates, the need for decolonisation in regard to its effects on culture and history is more important than ever: “The chill continues to wound, transform, humiliate us and our cultures. Any real understanding of ourselves and our existing cultures calls for an attempt to understand colonialism and what it did and is still doing to us” (p. 50).

MĀNATŪA

(MEMORIES)

“We are what we remember.”—Maulaivao Albert Wendt (2015: 8)

Maulaivao Albert Wendt encapsulates the importance of memory in a Pacific context: a blended temporality that rejects the clean-break narratives of Western conceptions of past, present and future to insist instead that our pasts are living, ever-present and carried by cultural performance and human connection. Oral history plays an inherent role in this cultured outlook as an essential means of knowledge dissemination throughout the Pacific. Memory is, therefore, a symbiotic experience between the personal, the independent and the collective, and the past, the present and the future; each facet shapes and is simultaneously shaped by the other.

Sāmoa exemplifies this in the numerous forms of oral genres: *alagā'upu* (proverbs), *tauloto* (poems) and *pese* (songs) (Lilomaiaava-Doktor 2020). According to Samantha Lichtenberg (2011: 36), these oratory expressions are “more than words and memories[;] these stories are the original strands of Samoan culture, realities that make up the world of a people and place”. I believe this statement has implications on a personal level, too. The stories, memories and experiences my father and grandfather shared undoubtedly shaped how I engage with our culture and understand my Samoan identity. However, my lived realities, experiences and memories are just as pertinent to the development of my self-identity; therefore, there must be room to adapt. Indeed, to insist that Samoan culture is, and has always been, homogeneous and static is to deny the fluidity and agency that have enabled Samoan society to flourish for millennia. Not all Samoan experiences are the same, even in a familial setting; my experiences differ from those of my father, and my father's from his. Thus, I explored the differences in these experiences and the gradual shifts necessary to adapt to an ever-changing social landscape.

Oftentimes throughout this project, I have looked back on various moments and personal experiences and realised the profound effects that they have had on the development of my self-identity. These moments have defined who I am today as a mixed-heritage Samoan. Geertz (1973) states, “The important thing about the anthropologist's findings is their complex specificity, their circumstantiality” (p. 23). The artefacts featured in the *Uso 4 Life* installation held specific personal value, derivative of memory and experience in order to strike commonality with the greater mixed-heritage Samoan community.

PRECEDENTS

Pacific artists operating in Auckland have varied artistic intentions, practices and outcomes. These artists have provided alternative ways of representing Pacific experiences in the diaspora and together have established a creative platform to contribute to the landscape of Pacific art.

Fatu Feu'u often comes to mind when referencing Samoan contemporary art for his innovative hybridised paintings and fine arts practices. At the time of Feu'u's emerging career, there was very little Pacific representation in New Zealand's art world. Alongside the resurgence of Māori art in the 1980s, Feu'u forged a path for Pacific artists to follow. However, even as Feu'u's career was growing, Auckland was undergoing—and indeed had already undergone—some significant societal changes.

After World War II, and at the request of the New Zealand government and its business sectors, vast numbers of Pacific peoples immigrated to New Zealand (Ministry for Culture and Heritage 2021). New Zealand's economic boom, which began during the recovery from the Great Depression, continued through to the postwar years when pastoral exports and large-scale

domestic manufacturing resulted in low unemployment and high personal spending. Importantly, however, the postwar economic boom that New Zealand experienced was aided by the cheap labour offered by the newly arrived Pacific migrants. Tui Ātua Tupua Tamasese Efi, Samoa's prime minister from 1976 to 1982 and son of the first co-head of state of Sāmoa, suggests three reasons why Pacific people made the journey to New Zealand: "job opportunities, money, and most importantly their children's education", which to many Samoans are considered vital to having a successful life (Ministry for Culture and Heritage 2021).

However, the so-called "land of milk and honey" would run dry before long, with Pacific people largely feeling the brunt of the recession. In 1968, an amendment was made to the already problematic and prejudiced Immigration Act of 1964, which the Norman Kirk-led Labour government of 1974 utilised in allowing the police authority to "ask people to produce not only a valid passport, but also a permit to enter and remain temporarily in New Zealand, as well as other evidence of identity" (Ministry for Culture and Heritage 2021) and incarcerate those who did not comply. This prejudice worsened as the New Zealand economy took significant blows at the hands of United Kingdom decision-making. New Zealand was looking for someone to blame, and from the mid-1970s the then prime minister Robert Muldoon, using populist and nationalistic tactics, forced the blame onto the Polynesian "overstayers". This fearmongering led to the dawn raids of the late 1970s, which would see police forcibly entering Polynesian households around central Auckland (Ponsonby, Grey Lynn and Herne Bay) in the early hours of the morning in search of those living in the country on visitor permits. People who had once been encouraged to immigrate to New Zealand were now deported en masse.

The prejudiced oppression that Pacific people experienced at the hands of the New Zealand government inspired Pacific youth to collectivise. The most notable example is the Polynesian Panthers, a Pacific rights group whose headquarters was based in the newly established Pacific hub of Ponsonby. Inspired by the African American Black Panther movement, the Polynesian Panthers compared their experiences of racism and marginalisation to those of their American counterparts and sought to support Pacific communities in Auckland. Such support included legal aid services for those threatened with deportation, homework clubs for Pacific youth, political lobbying, large-scale public protests and companion services for children who would be left behind in New Zealand after their parents were deported (Ana'e 2020).

My grandparents, Jennifer Stewart and Semisi Ma'ia'i, married in 1964—noting it was unusual for pālagi and Samoans to wed at the time—and relocated to Sāmoa in 1966. They returned to New Zealand in the 1970s and immediately struggled to find a place to live. According to my grandmother,

they decided she would do the negotiations under her maiden name, Stewart, and try to keep my grandfather “out of sight.” They eventually settled in Kumeū, west of Auckland, where they were largely “insulated from the unrest” (Jennifer Ma'ia'i, personal communication, 2021). However, my grandfather, an elder at the Newton Pacific Island Presbyterian Church, was privy to the goings-on around the central areas and kept his passport on him just in case. Eventually, my grandfather established his practice as a general practitioner in Whenuapai (West Auckland), where many Samoan people would travel to have their medical concerns assessed by a familiar face in a familiar language. The “locals” were resentful of this Pacific influx and were astonished that this Samoan man, my grandfather, was not some labourer but, indeed, a general practitioner. My father and his brother were also subject to this pervasive gaze, having gone through the historically elitist Auckland Grammar School in the societal wake of the dawn raids.

The events of the dawn raids and the subsequent formation of the Polynesian Panthers signalled a shift among the Polynesian youth in Auckland and redefined what it meant to be “Pacific” in New Zealand. Artists who had grown up during these times began to express frustrations and critique the hegemonic structures and institutions that had attempted to stifle their culture and, ultimately, their identity.

Michel Tuffery is arguably one of the more recognised contemporary Pacific artists in New Zealand, with his iconic *Pisupo Lua Afe* (1994) and *Povi* series. *Pisupo Lua Afe* resonated with me for its use of reclaimed materials and its sharp social commentary on the relationship between New Zealand and Sāmoa and the introduction of livestock to the island nation. Tuffery details his frustration with the deforestation of land in parts of Sāmoa to accommodate livestock. His concerns arose when he witnessed fertilisers and other agricultural run-off seeping into the waterways and ultimately into the reef. Another concern, Tuffery explains, is the amount of pollution found in and around the villages, which, at the time, Sāmoa could not effectively dispose of. The onus, Tuffery adds, is on the companies themselves, since they are importing these goods to Sāmoa, much like the agricultural initiatives that damaged the Samoan ecosystem (“APT3 / Michel Tuffery”, 2018). All of these concerns are heavily linked to New Zealand's relationship with Sāmoa, the economic and political presence that has steered Sāmoa to a more Western, globalised existence.

Another artist, Siliga David Setoga, has produced works with a similarly astute critique of New Zealand–Sāmoa relations. *(Influ)enza* (2008), a work still relevant today, displays fruit boxes emblazoned with a subverted, satirised version of the Enza fruit logo. This work functions on many levels. It invokes the history of New Zealand's role in the 1918 Spanish flu epidemic in Sāmoa and the subsequent loss of 22 percent of Sāmoa's population

(Ministry for Culture and Heritage 2020) whilst also commenting on New Zealand's dependency on Pacific workers. In an eerily accurate demonstration of foresight, Setoga's work also serves as a commentary on the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme implemented by the governments of Australia and New Zealand around the time Setoga created *(In)flu*enza and providing the people of the Pacific with seasonal employment in the countries' orchards. While the policy initially allowed for 5,000 RSE migrants a year, this number has steadily increased, with 19,000 RSE migrants arriving on New Zealand shores in 2022/23 (New Zealand Immigration 2023). The New Zealand government promoted the RSE scheme as a "triple-win" initiative benefiting the Pacific labour market, bolstering economic growth throughout the Pacific and increasing the financial standing of immigrant workers. However, as KDee Aimiti Ma'ia'i (2019) states:

[W]e might question the extent to which these benefits have been realised, and indeed whether it is a "triple win" policy, for while New Zealand has reaped benefits, the same good harvest has not been enjoyed by the Pacific. (p. 1)

As the RSE scheme is predicated on seasonal and *cyclical* migration, RSE migrants may only work in New Zealand for seven months per year and at the same time are encouraged to participate in indefinite repeat migrations. In this sense, the particularities of the RSE scheme have meant that RSE migrants are a highly productive yet legislatively disposable population. Indeed, as John Gibson and David McKenzie (2014) note, "RSE workers ... picked an average of 54 percent more fruit per day than New Zealand contract labour, and 82 percent more than backpackers and working holiday makers" (p. 203). This productivity is not, however, adequately reflected in the economic benefits for Pacific RSE workers. Of the average NZ\$12,000 that an RSE migrant makes per season, \$6,500 is spent on predeparture and living costs such as accommodation (paid by the employee to the employer). This suggests, then, that New Zealand, rather than Pacific people, is the primary beneficiary of this supposed triple-win initiative and implies that New Zealand's colonial force over the Pacific is still very much present today.

Importantly, however, Setoga and Tuffery speak to a particular generation of Samoan culture and identity in New Zealand, that of the children of first-wave Samoan immigrants. This generation's experiences are markedly different from mine, and my work functions within this cultural "grey area". The grey area I am referring to is not a "third space" or a state of hybridity. Instead, it steps beyond these binary models and leans more towards a state of multiplicity (Bhabha 2015; Bhabha and Rutherford 2006).

Graham Fletcher's *Lounge Room Tribalism* is a series of paintings featuring Polynesian artefacts in modernist-style home settings. In my opinion, the placement of the objects in these Western settings speaks to the

commodification and fetishisation of Indigenous artefacts, a phenomenon made popular by the primitivist movement and the establishment of ethnographic museums (Mallon and Tonga 2020). This could also be interpreted as an example of an artwork or artefact's value being increased or enhanced when it is situated in foreign or unusual contexts. Siapo (barkcloth), for example, viewed in its original context, has an undeniable artistic value; however, its uses are primarily ceremonial. The same can be said of the tānoa ('ava (kava) bowl): the craftsmanship and skill required to carve such a bowl are immense, and, much like the siapo, it is a work of art, albeit with practical ceremonial functionality.

This phenomenon of decontextualisation has become increasingly more common, fuelled by tourism industries throughout the Pacific. Tourism has created a demand for commodified versions of once traditional artefacts. Sāmoan siapo, for example, has gained use in non-traditional ways. It is often used in jewellery, handbags, placemats, wall hangings and other home décor to accommodate the demand created by tourism. This “non-traditional” display of the cultural artefact, whether in a gallery space, an ethnographic museum or someone's home, changes the reading of the artefact from something ceremonial into a curio, a colonial bounty or an expression of one's culturedness.

‘O A‘U O LO‘U ‘ĀIGA

(I AM MY FAMILY)

During the second year of my undergraduate degree, my grandfather, Papaāli'i Dr. Semisi Ma'ia'i, sadly passed away. His passing provoked feelings of cultural disruption and dislocation. I felt as though my link to Samoan culture was lost, and I was compelled to learn more and explore this connection on my own. I have continued to seek further understanding about what it means to be a mixed-heritage Samoan, and how my identity has been shaped through personal and shared experience and the gifting of intergenerational knowledge.

Much of this exploration has surfaced during my making process, which has often proven to be meditative, allowing me the space and time to recall and reminisce. Part of the *Talofa™* work (Fig. 2), for example, involved dismantling plastic 'ula (garlands) and adhering the individual flowers onto a backing (not pictured). During this monotonous process, I refined concepts surrounding colonial influence and its effects on the Pacific. Further, I explored plastification as a theme and the meaning of the word plastic in relation to mixed-heritage identity.

This exploration continued into the last year of my bachelor's degree with the works titled *Sāmoasonite* and *Sāmoasonite and Friends* (Fig. 3). These works were centred around the idea of being “plastic”—lacking in the socially



Figure 2. Jimmy Ma'ia'i, *Talofa™*, ceramic, enamel paint, 2019.

constructed (and policed) cultured markers of ethnic identity—in relation to one's culture. Similar to the *Talofa™* works, I took an item that has strong cultural connections to the Pacific and is simultaneously made of plastic: the red, white and blue chequered woven plastic bag often derogatorily referred to as the “Samoan suitcase”. This bag is synonymous with travel and migration throughout the Pacific and is, therefore, directly connected to New Zealand's Samoan diaspora and their New Zealand-born children. The treatment of the bags involved disassembling their physical form and, once deconstructed, cutting the formless material into strips. These strips imitated the faux-thatching found on a Samoan-styled fale on Avondale's Rosebank School grounds in Auckland. Though it is made from nontraditional synthetic materials, it serves as a site for the school's Pacific cohort to be represented in their environment and to connect with their culture. This deeply resonated with me as a mixed-heritage Samoan dislocated from their culture, and thus the concept of the *Sāmoasonite* works was solidified.

The regular use of plastic throughout my work not only refers to the challenges that mixed-heritage Samoans face in affirming their own identity but also speaks to broader themes of neocolonial trends in Samoan–Australasian relationships (Mallon *et al.* 2012). If we are to understand neocolonialism as the imposition and control of former colonial powers over



Figure 3. Jimmy Ma'ia'i, *Sāmoasonite 2.1*, mixed media, 2020.

their former territories, we must locate and assess the imbalances and impacts of uneven international relations. Indeed, even though in 1962 Sāmoa was the first island in the Pacific to regain its independence, the talons of colonisation remain firmly embedded. These trends may be seen in the aforementioned RSE scheme, structurally inequitable trade relations, negligent climate policy, increased pollution and inefficient development and aid policies. Such examples ensure that New Zealand is able to retain the benefits of empire despite Sāmoa no longer being a New Zealand colonial outpost.

On the surface, the *Sāmoasonite* works act as a form of reclamation, taking back the “Samoan suitcase” with the aim of recasting derogatory stereotypes to instead instil pride in the users’ community—a badge of honour, perhaps.

They also function as an entry point to cultural engagement. The act of making the plastic imitation thatching displayed an ad hoc attempt to fashion a traditional Samoan item, reflecting the imitation fale at the school. This engagement demonstrates an example of knowing *about* the culture but not *knowing* the culture, which is a consistent theme throughout my work.

These themes of the traditional/introduced, organic/inorganic and real/fake continued to appear throughout *Uso 4 Life* by way of traditional materials, artefacts and symbols.

The objects featured within the installation were inspired by these key concepts:

- i) Memory and experiences
- ii) ‘Afakasi/“plastic”
- iii) Neo/postcolonial relations with Sāmoa
- iv) The segregated site

Uso 4 Life was a representation of my personal, formative memories. These memories, formed either in New Zealand or Sāmoa, have pertinence to my understanding of, and engagement with, my Samoan culture. Within this work, there was an exploration of materials that echoed my exploration of culture. The concepts and ideas explored within the work inspired the material choices. For example, the presence of plastic in most of the artefacts is related directly to the notion of being an ‘afakasi or plastic Samoan.

The installation space, or the *Segregated Site*, was derived from the concept that Auckland is a segregated city, divided into social, ethnic or economic ethnoburbs. If these have a large Pacific population, they are likely to face high population density, socioeconomic deprivation and political and social neglect. However, despite this marginalisation, these Pacific neighbourhoods often manifest themselves as hubs for Pacific cultures to flourish, where language, cuisine, culture, collectivity and community exploration can thrive. This idea of cultures flourishing resonates throughout this body of work through the artefacts within the *Segregated Site*; the materials, the bright colours, the lights and the symbols all celebrate Pacific culture.

IFILELE

(KWILA)

Ifilele (kwila; *Intsia* sp.), a hardwood native to Sāmoa and used by communities to sustain life and culture, was traditionally used for weaponry, construction and handicrafts. In the 1970s, however, a forestry initiative was implemented by an American multinational, followed by New Zealand and Australia, which saw the native hardwood industrialised and exported for use in interior decorating, outdoor furniture and decking. The commercialisation

process for this species similarly occurred in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands at the hands of Japanese, Australian and New Zealand foresters. I was fortunate enough to procure some of this exported ifilele that had been used as decking timber at my brother-in-law's family home. Though it is over 20 years old, and despite its rough and weathered surface, the wood remained untarnished with its integrity intact.

By reimagining and recasting the ifilele decking timber towards more traditional forms—whilst still maintaining its scars from its past—my use of the wood demonstrates a reappropriation of “Pacific plunder” and reclamation of Indigenous material. The industrialisation of ifilele for non-Pacific commercial intent in line with *pākehā* (New Zealand European) priorities—cast adrift as decking timber and thus stripped of its sacred and cultured position in Samoan communities—springs from the same industrial machine that brought Pacific people to New Zealand in the mid-twentieth century, that commodifies Pacific labour and that relegates Pacific social, cultural and economic well-being to the fringes of society. It is this context that renders a critique of the clubs I made out of the ifilele necessary.



Figure 4. Ifilele decking timber, unprepared, 2021.

Since the wood has been cut into decking planks (Fig. 4), the material required extensive preparation to get it to a point where it could be workable. I first removed the nails left behind from their previous existence and brushed off excess moss, dirt and detritus before finally cutting the planks to a uniform width. From here, I put the planks through a thickness planer and exposed the wood's original colour. This treatment left the planks with a uniform width and thickness, and from here, I was able to laminate the planks together. The lamination process for the blanks of each artefact differed slightly. For example, the blanks for the clubs were laminated to roughly match the shape of the finished product to allow for a more straightforward carving experience. The blank for the bowl was laminated in an overlapping pattern to provide more strength. Though traditionally these artefacts are carved by hand with adzes and chisels, I used a combination of techniques, including woodturning, carving, power carving and various finishing techniques.

There are four artefacts in this installation that have been fashioned using the reclaimed ifilele: a pair of fa'alautaliga (ear-shaped clubs), an uatogi (war club), which has taken the shape of a baseball bat, and a tānoa. Each of these artefacts is made to loosely resemble its traditional counterpart, with the exception of the introduced, plastic or foreign materials.

FA'ALAUTALIGA

The fa'alautaliga are inspired by a fond memory I have of my first trip to Sāmoa. I recall being obsessed with the clubs found at the maketi (market) in Apia: the patterns, the shapes and the materials. I eventually convinced my grandparents to buy one for me, a touristic form of a fa'alau fa'i, a wooden spear with serrations below the blade, engraved with "Pacific style" patterns, which I still cherish to this day.

My fa'alautaliga (Fig. 5) do not share this same adornment. Aside from the nail holes from the material's past form, they are patternless. The omission of the "Pacific" patterns demonstrates a form of humility, an acknowledgment of the tufuga (experts) and the skill required to execute this traditional art form. This reflects a level of respect for the rich history of Samoan craftsmanship and an awareness of my positionality as a diasporic mixed-ethnicity Samoan in that I am not trying to make a historically accurate fa'alautaliga (Fasavalu and Reynolds 2019). On the other hand, the attempt to create a "traditional" artefact exhibits the desire to engage with my Samoan culture without the guidance of an elder or a tufuga (Gershon 2012). These attempts to engage in one's heritage are common amongst dislocated diasporic Samoans, especially if they are of mixed heritage. Unlike their counterparts in Sāmoa, our understanding of fa'asāmoa is often a diluted version, and thus, we must navigate through our culture on our own.



Figure 5. Jimmy Ma'ia'i, *Fa'alautaliga* (detail), reclaimed ifilele, garden twine, 2021.

The clubs also feature green plastic lashing around the handle, again referencing the theme of the organic alongside the inorganic, exemplifying the concept of being a plastic Samoan. The green twine is an intergenerational reference. According to my dad, my grandfather fashioned his own adze for use on their farm. He wrapped the handle with green gardening string, not Paracord, jute or plastic twine but a fine green string, tightly bound around the handle. My father emulated this green wrapping with our sapelu, making his own handle and binding it with green electrical tape. Though it's a little faded now, it remains as trusty as ever.

In order to make these clubs “flourish” within the *Segregated Site*, I finished the clubs using a series of sandpapers, making them extremely smooth to the touch, and gave the clubs a wax coating to give them a lustrous shine. This shine also indicates their personal value to me—they are polished and maintained because they are a treasure.

UATOI

The other club, the uatogi (Fig. 6), is also made from the reclaimed ifilele. I made a blank similar to a baseball bat blank and turned the bat using a lathe. This club was initially meant to take the shape of a more traditional club; however, the more time I spent making the bat, the more time I had to contemplate the reading of this club and how the final shape would contribute to this installation. I began to see that there was space to portray development within my self-identification through this bat; the fa'alautaliga echoed a traditional club and



Figure 6. Jimmy Ma'ia'i, *Uatogi*, reclaimed ifilele, polyurethane, insulation tape, 2022.

demonstrated an engagement with something cultural, while the bat resembles something Western or foreign. Thus, this Westernised “club” aims to mirror the influence of Western culture on New Zealand’s Pacific diaspora.

The bat-styled uatogi offers another further-reaching concept regarding the Samoan diaspora in the United States. The film *My Crasy Life* (1992), by Jean-Pierre Gorin, follows the lives of members of the gang Sons of Samoa. Migrants from both Tutuila (American Samoa) and Western Samoa adapt to the American way of life whilst maintaining a connection to their Samoan heritage through church and family. The young men had found themselves in a world that totally contrasted with the one they had grown up in—a world that ultimately failed them. Evidence of this failure can be seen when the young men are asked about their schooling, and in response, one describes a fight involving a school counsellor at age 10. This fight would see the boy incarcerated, exemplifying the failure of the colonial structures and their inability to accommodate cultures that differ from those they were designed to benefit. My “bat” makes reference to the Seattle Mariners baseball caps the gang members wear and gang violence, but it is also in conversation with the ideas surrounding colonial hegemony and its mishandling of our Pacific peoples.

NOFOA

(CHAIRS)

The plastic outdoor chairs I exhibited are commonly used in Sāmoa and are linked to another pertinent memory of my time there. I noticed that my aunt was sitting on a stack of these chairs as if they were being put into storage. When asked why she had configured her chair this way, she informed us that it was to avoid the chair legs from breaking beneath her. After learning this, I began to spot these stacked chairs wherever we went.

The chairs (Fig. 7) are meant to seem humorous on the surface. In my experience, a typical Samoan reaction to someone falling over, tripping up and even breaking a chair would be to laugh it off. The humorous nature of these chairs is clearly displayed in the splayed legs and bright, childish colour scheme. The shine, also found in the various wooden objects, aims to show a level of resilience—an armour of sorts. The chairs also reflect the effects of New Zealand’s colonial presence in Sāmoa, the introduction of plastics and the importation of foods high in sodium and cholesterol, such as corned beef or pisupo.

TĀNOA

In the early-to-mid-2000s, like many other children my age, I became obsessed with Beyblades, toys associated a merchandise-driven manga series from Japan. Beyblades are essentially spinning tops that competitors use to battle each other in a plastic “arena” to see whose top can stay spinning the longest. Both the Beyblades and the arena were very expensive. My friends and I overcame this financial barrier by fashioning our makeshift



Figure 7. Jimmy Ma‘ia‘i, *Nofo i lalo*, plastic outdoor chairs, heat-formed legs, plastic primer, enamel paint, 2022.

“Beyblades” out of plastic bottle tops, using a string and a pencil as the winding mechanism. There was, however, something missing: the arena. My dad, whom I had roped into the Beyblade phenomenon, suggested we use our tānoa to do battle. And so we did.

In this context, the bowl was no longer used for the ‘ava ceremony but instead as a toy. That is not to say I wasn’t aware of its cultural significance. Instead, I offered a new interpretation of the tānoa (Fig. 8). In order to emphasise these concepts, I added a plastic foundation, a set of legs much larger in diameter than most Samoan tānoa, giving the bowl a childish, almost toy-like characteristic. This memory offers the most concise reading of the carved, wooden objects: the contemporary, Western, often naive engagement or interaction with a traditional, cultural item.



Figure 8. Jimmy Ma'ia'i, *Tānoa*, reclaimed ifilele, resin, 2022.

CONCLUSION

Installation practices often act as outlets for expressing one's culture and identity, immersing the audience within the artist's experiences and ideas (Kadirkaikobad *et al.* 2016). Installation is a highly versatile practice that allows for a variety of production modes and displays, and it has the capacity to address a wide scope of artists' concerns (IMMA 2018). Thus, the possibilities for expressing the complexities of multifaceted subjects, such as identity and culture, are vast. The exploration of these complexities was expressed through each of the artefacts within this installation. The material decisions, the treatments of these materials and the modes of display all relate to the aforementioned concepts and provide a personal insight into my experiences and memories pertinent to culture and identity.

This project set out to explore intergenerational changes in identity and culture through the lens of memory and experience. Employing autoethnographic methods of research and making resulted in a deeper understanding of my own identity; like the boy with the sapelu, it has made me feel Samoan. These personal memories rest within the broader historical contexts of Samoan diasporic communities in New Zealand, which have simultaneously informed this work. Colonialism, hegemonic discrimination, socioeconomic and environmental disparities, and Western influence and integration are all factors that shaped this exploration and the outcomes of the installation. However, this work was an extension of myself, and I am an extension of my 'āiga (family). I believe that as long as I exist, I will continue to further this understanding, creating new memories through new experiences.

GLOSSARY

The terms in this glossary are Samoan unless otherwise indicated. The Samoan glosses are based on definitions appearing in *Tusi 'upu Sāmoa* (vol. 1) by Papaāli'itele Dr Semisi Ma'ia'i.

'āiga	family; relation
'afakasi	colloquialism denoting someone of mixed heritage
'ava	kava; a special drink made from the root of <i>Piper Methysticum</i>
alagā'upu	proverb
fa'alau fa'i	wooden spear with a diamond-shaped blade and serrations below the blade
fa'alautaliga	ear-shaped club
fa'amatai	system of chiefs that structures and organises Sāmoan society
fa'asāmoa	the culture of Sāmoa
fale	house; abode
fale pālafi	European-styled house
feau	chores
fia pālafi	someone who has adopted a European way of living
ifilele	kwila, a Samoan hardwood or ironwood (<i>Intsia</i> sp.)
kūmara	sweet potato (New Zealand Māori)
maketi	market
mānatūa	to remember
matāi	head of a family; titled person

nofoa	seat; chair
pākehā	New Zealand European (New Zealand Māori)
pālagi	abbreviation of papālagi; a European person
pese	song
pisupo	canned goods
povi māsima	corned beef
sapelu	sabre; machete
siapo	cloth made from mulberry bark
tānoa	a ceremonial bowl used for 'ava ceremonies
tauloto	poem
tufuga	expert
uatogi	war club
'ula	necklace; garland
uso	brother

REFERENCES

- Aiono, Fana'afi, 1986. Western Samoa: The sacred covenant. In *Land Rights of Pacific Women*. Suva, Fiji: Institute of Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific, pp. 103–10.
- Anae, Melani, 2020. The terror of the Dawn Raids. *E-Tangata*, 18 October 2020. <https://e-tangata.co.nz/history/the-terror-of-the-dawn-raids/>
- “APT3 / Michel Tuffery: Povi tau vaga (The challenge).” YouTube video, 5:09, posted by QAGOMA, 9 October 2018. <https://youtu.be/1YPtAKzGO2o>
- Bhabha, Homi K., 2015. Foreword. In P. Wernber and T. Modood (eds), *Debating Cultural Hybridity: Multicultural Identities and the Politics of Anti-Racism*. London: Zed Books, pp. ix–xiii.
- Bhabha, Homi K. and John Rutherford, 2006. Le tiers-espace [The third space]. In French. *Multitudes* 26 (3): 95–107. <https://doi.org/10.3917/mult.026.0095>
- Fanon, Frantz, 1970. *Black Skin, White Masks*. London: Paladin.
- Fasavalu, Talitinga Ian and Martyn Reynolds, 2019. Relational positionality and a learning disposition: Shifting the conversation. *International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives* 18 (2): 11–25.
- Franklin, Marianne I., 2003. I define my own identity: Pacific articulations of “race” and “culture” on the Internet. *Ethnicities* 3 (4): 465–90. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468796803003004002>
- Geertz, Clifford, 1973. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books.
- Gershon, Ilana, 2012. *No Family Is an Island: Cultural Expertise Among Samoans in Diaspora*. Ithaca/London: Cornell University Press.
- Gibson, John and David McKenzie, 2014. Development through seasonal worker programs: The case of New Zealand’s RSE program. In R.E.B. Lucas (ed.), *International Handbook on Migration and Economic Development*. Cheltenham:

- Edward Elgar Publishing, pp. 186–210.
<https://doi.org/10.4337/9781782548072.00011>
- Gorin, Jean-Pierre (director), 1992. *My Crasy Life*. Documentary, 1 hour 35 minutes. Available at: <https://youtube/-5Q5YnhY-I4>
- Hau‘ofa, Epeli, 2008a. Our sea of islands. In P. D’Arcy, *Peoples of the Pacific: The History of Oceania to 1870*. Routledge, pp. 429–42.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315247175>
- Hau‘ofa, Epeli, 2008b. *We Are the Ocean: Selected Works*. Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press.
- Henderson, April, 2016. The I and the we: Individuality, collectivity, and Samoan artistic responses to cultural change. *The Contemporary Pacific* 28 (2): 316–45.
<https://doi.org/10.1353/cp.2016.0027>
- IMMA (Irish Museum of Modern Art), 2010. What Is Installation Art? Booklet, What Is series. https://imma.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/what_is_installationbooklet.pdf
- Kadirkaikobad, Najmul, Md Zafar Bhuiyan, Shahina Parveen and Md Shohel Anwarr, 2016. The traditional and cultural practice of installation art: A contextual study. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 21 (3): 13–18.
<https://doi.org/10.9790/0837-2103041318>
- Keddel, Emily, 2006. Pavlova and pineapple pie: Selected identity influences and Samoan-Pakeha people in Aotearoa/New Zealand. *Kōtuitui: New Zealand Journal of Social Sciences Online* 1 (1): 45–63. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1177083X.2006.9522410>
- Lawson, Stephanie, 2010. “The Pacific Way” as postcolonial discourse: Towards a reassessment. *Journal of Pacific History* 45 (3): 297–314.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00223344.2010.530810>
- Leaf, Rebecca Violeti, 2017. The Influence of Shifting Pacific Identities in Learning: The Experience of Parents Raising Children of Mixed Pacific Ethnicities. Master’s thesis, Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand.
<http://hdl.handle.net/10179/11205>
- Lichtenberg, Samantha, 2011. Experiencing Samoa through stories: Myths and legends of a people and place. Independent Study Project (ISP) Collection 1057. Unpublished paper. https://digitalcollections.sit.edu/isp_collection/1057
- Lilomaiaava-Doktor, Sa‘iliemanu, 2020. Oral traditions, cultural significance of storytelling, and Sāmoan understandings of place or fanua. *Native American and Indigenous Studies* 7 (1): 121–51. <http://hdl.handle.net/10790/5366>
- Lopesi, Lana, 2018. So, You Want to Be the “Largest Polynesian City in the World”? *The Pantograph Punch*, 6 April 2018.
<https://pantograph-punch.com/posts/largest-polynesian-city>
- Ma‘ia‘i, KDee Aimiti, 2019. “Triple wins” But for a Single Recipient: The Unfulfilled Potential of New Zealand’s Registered Seasonal Employer Scheme. BA(Hons) dissertation, Waipapa Taumata Rau University of Auckland.
- Ma‘ia‘i, Papaāli‘i Dr. Semisi, 2010. *Tusi ‘upu Sāmoa*. Auckland: Little Island Press.
- Mallon, Sean, Kolokesa Māhina-Tuai and Damon Salesa (eds), 2012. *Tangata o le Moana: New Zealand and the People of the Pacific*. Wellington: Te Papa Press.

- Mallon, Sean and Nina Tonga, 2020. Materializing German-Sāmoan colonial legacies. In P. Schorch, N.M.K.Y. Kahanu, S. Mallon, C.M. Pakarati, M. Mulrooney, N. Tonga and T.P. Kāwika Tengan (eds), *Refocusing Ethnographic Museums Through Oceanic Lenses*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, pp. 121–46. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvn5twfj.11>
- Mara, Ratu Sir Kamisese, 1997. *The Pacific Way: A Memoir*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- McGrath, Barbara Burns, 2002. Seattle *fa'a Sāmoa*. *The Contemporary Pacific* 14 (2): 307–40. <https://doi.org/10.1353/cp.2002.0059>
- Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2020. The 1918 influenza pandemic: Influenza in Samoa. Updated 22 April 2020. New Zealand History, Ministry for Culture and Heritage. <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/culture/1918-influenza-pandemic/samoa>
- 2021. The dawn raids: Causes, impacts and legacy. Updated 2 November 2023. New Zealand History, Ministry for Culture and Heritage. <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/culture/dawn-raids>
- Narokobi, Bernard, 1983. *The Melanesian Way*. Boroko: Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies.
- New Zealand Immigration, 2023. Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme research. <https://www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/research-and-statistics/research-reports/recognised-seasonal-employer-rse-scheme>
- Said, Edward, 1978. *Orientalism*. New York: Pantheon.
- Salesa, Damon, 2017. *Island Time: New Zealand's Pacific Futures*. BWB Texts No. 64. Wellington: Bridget Williams Books.
- Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty, 1994. Can the subaltern speak? In *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader*, edited by P. Williams and L. Chrisman, 66–111. London/New York: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315656496>
- Stats NZ, 2020. Pacific Peoples ethnic group. <https://www.stats.govt.nz/tools/2018-census-ethnic-group-summaries/pacific-peoples>
- Suaalii-Sauni, Tamasailau, 2012. “It’s in your bones!”: Sāmoan custom and discourses of certainty. *Yearbook of New Zealand Jurisprudence* 13/14: 70–88.
- Teaiwa, Teresia, 2006. On analogies: Rethinking the Pacific in a global context. *The Contemporary Pacific* 18 (1): 71–87. <https://doi.org/10.1353/cp.2005.0105>
- Wendt, Albert, 1976. Towards a new Oceania. *Mana Review* 1 (1): 49–60. <https://ethnc3990.files.wordpress.com/2014/12/wendt-toward-a-new-oceania.pdf>
- 2015. *Out of the Vaipē, the Deadwater: A Writer's Early Life*. Wellington: Bridget Williams Books.

AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Jimmy Ma'ia'i, Tāmaki Paenga Hira Auckland War Memorial Museum, The Domain, Parnell, Auckland 1010, New Zealand. jmaiai@aucklandmuseum.com
<https://orcid.org/0009-0007-8715-0253>



Jimmy Ma'ia'i, *Uso 4 Life* installation preparation, 2022.