



Te Taumata  
Toi-a-Iwi

## NGĀ TOI ADVOCACY HUI - NOTES // 23 Sept 2021

---

### PARTICIPANTS...

Alice Sherman – NZ Writers Guild	Elizabeth Vaneveld – University of Auckland	Matthew Goldsworthy – Youth Arts NZ
Alison Taylor – Te Taumata Toi-a-Iwi	Hiraani Himona – Te Tuhi	Mel Powell - Circability
Ahilapalapa Rands* – Moana Fresh	Huia O’Sullivan – Ngā Rangatahi Toa	Meijing Hei – Artspace Aotearoa
Andrew Clifford – Te Uru	Jade Baker – Auckland Council	Michael Brook – Auckland Unlimited
Asha Munn* – Create Collaborative	Jane Yonge – Te Taumata Toi-a-Iwi	Michelle Rahurahu Scott* – Te Taumata Toi-a-Iwi
Bhavesh Bhuthaida – The Open Fort	Janine Dijkmeijer – NZ Dance Company	Narelle Jackson – Te Taumata Toi-a-Iwi
Borni Te Rongopai Tukiwaho – Taurima Vibes	Jeremy Mayall* – Creative Waikato	Pelenakeke Brown* – Independent Artist
Briar Monro – Creative New Zealand	Jessica Palalagi* – Moana Fresh	Rachael Trotman – Weave
Catherine Percy* – Crescendo	Joanna Maskell – Auckland Council	Robin Hickman – Te Taumata Toi-a-Iwi
Chantelle Whaiapu – Te Taumata Toi-a-Iwi	Kylie Sealy – Te Taumata Toi-a-Iwi	Vaimaila Urale* – Moana Fresh
Edith Fumarola* – Covert Theatre	Liz Civil – Auckland Council	Victoria Blood – WeCreate
Eynon Delamere – Te Taumata Toi-a-Iwi	Marcus Powell* – Crescendo	Zachary Macer* – Taurima Vibes

*\* Acknowledging and welcoming Ahilapalapa Rands, Asha Munn, Catherine Percy, Edith Fumarola, Jeremy Mayall, Jessica Palalagi, Marcus Powell, Mel Powell, Michelle Rahurahu Scott, Pelenakeke Brown, Vaimaila Urale, Zachary Macer to Ngā Toi Advocacy Network*

## Introduction

The hui began with a reflection from **Eynon Delamere** about the passing of Matariki, particularly around the star Pōhutukawa which connects Matariki to the dead. Te Waka O Rangi is a canoe with Matariki at the front and Tautoru (Orion's belt) at the back, captained by a star called Taramainuku. Te Kupenga a Taramainuku is the net of Taramainuku that is cast down from the waka and captures the souls that have passed, carries them for eleven months, then the souls are taken to the underworld. This marks the time to reflect on loss.

**Alison Taylor** opened the kōrero, noting the significance of hauora in the arts sector, with **Jane Yonge** supporting and facilitating.

## Discussion

*Nurturing Hauora & Wellbeing: We can be in control of when we stop.* **Chantelle Whaiapu** introduced **Borni Te Rongopai Tukiwaho** as the speaker of the hui.

At the bottom of the page is a full transcript of the kōrero for those who were not able to attend. The kōrero touched on these main points:

- Mana Motuhake, Tino Rangatiratanga, Self-Autonomy: self-care is not selfish. Leaders and members of the arts community need to prioritize themselves to offer stronger mahi, we need to reframe the whakaaro around self-care.
- What does hauora mean? Hauora literally means: Hau = Vitality, Ora = Life. The way we can make our lives full of vitality is by being a part of a community that can support you and being able to seek that support for yourself. Addressing hauora in the arts sector requires kindness and understanding; the arts often see mental health as a barrier for work, or from a deficit space, rather than an opportunity to stop, breathe, and be grounded.
- Te Ao Māori is a valuable framework to guide support for artists in mental health. Systemic colonisation is a barrier to meaningful networks of support.
- We can share resources that enable the network to find time to settle as individuals and as organisations by creating hubs of knowledge for hauora, and will contribute to a live document that contains these resources.
- **Huia O'Sullivan** shared a quick and effective tool to check in with the people in your organization on a deep level, based around four questions: "what you've done to look after yourself?", "something you're grateful for", "the world looks better when..." and "today I will..."
- There needs to be action in these spaces of wellness and hauora, especially for those who are not being heard e.g., grassroots organisations, vulnerable whānau, etc. There is an urgency to close the gap between independent artists and organisations, especially during Covid. What responsibility do organisations have for the artists they engage with?

## Advocacy Updates

- The second [State of the Arts Survey](#) is live. Please share with your networks so that we can collectively understand the impact of this current moment on the sector. The survey is led by Toi o Taraika Arts Wellington with the support of Wellington City Council (Pōneke), Te Taumata Toi-a-lwi (Tāmaki Makaurau) and Creative Waikato (Waikato). Manatū Taonga Ministry for Culture and Heritage has recently come on board to support this survey to extend its reach to respondents throughout Aotearoa.
- [Arts Sector Delta Letter](#) has been distributed. If you have any pātai about this, email Jane at [jane@tetaumatatoiaiwi.org.nz](mailto:jane@tetaumatatoiaiwi.org.nz)
- The November 5th Summit will now be in 2022. More updates on that in 2022, and updates on what we're going to do on November the 5th instead will follow.
- AMA (Arts Makers Aotearoa) has received funding for a part time administrator from the Council to cover six months' support for an administrator.
- Artspace is looking for a director; they're expecting someone to come on board at the beginning of next year. If anyone in the network can point toward the strongest and the most needed leadership in in our sector, or if anyone happens through a recruitment process where they have learned how to encourage wider and more inclusive participation into that recruitment process, to contact Meijing at [meijing@artspace.org.nz](mailto:meijing@artspace.org.nz)
- Liz Civil provided an update on Toi Whītiki. Over this last year Toi Whītiki (Auckland Arts and Culture strategy) has been under review. The review spoke to the current state of the arts and culture landscape in Auckland and the impact of COVID, drawing on research that Te Taumata has done over the last year. Council have permissioned a reimaging of Toi Whītiki to address the challenges the sector is facing. Three key shifts were identified; how do we get greater fairness, equity and diversity in the ecosystem; the way the ecosystem is resourced and supported; the next phase of work to address te Tiriti o Te Waitangi principles and embedding te reo Māori more visibly in the strategy going forward. Auckland Council is a major investor but are not the deliverers of content so there is an invitation to the sector to develop a collective impact approach that can deliver on a shared common purpose.

**Rachael Trotman** led a short workshop on strengthening the network. In June, a survey went around the network and 14 people responded, giving a snapshot of perspectives. There were four key themes:

1. Share resources around advocacy: thought leadership, like the work that Rosabel Tan has done and others through this network over the last year;
2. Growing and diversifying the network;
3. A stronger visibility and media presence for advocacy work, in Tamaki Makaurau and in general;
4. Action: a mix of quick and longer term action, clear asks and people working explicitly on specific actions.

Two questions guided the conversation:

1. Thinking about Tamaki Makaurau over the next year, what is the context that we need to be thinking about for advocacy around the arts for Auckland? E.g., the 2022 local government election, the COVID backdrop that's shifting and changing all the time. What is it that we need to keep in mind when we're thinking about what we should be doing in advocacy space?
2. What are the thoughts on what some of those things could be in the next year?

### **Reflections from the network included:**

- The need for continual telling of stories of what it is to be a creative in Auckland; the loss of income, moving back to the regions. Storytelling can be a way to elicit empathy through the media so that communities can understand the importance of the arts.
- How do we help platform these stories and allow them to be heard on all levels?
- The local government election next year could be a driver for action. This Network has the opportunity to do something in a public way.
- How do we inform Councils about the value of the arts sector? What are the ways in which we might generate Council engagement? Local government needs to know about the ongoing stresses and strains and the actual impact of COVID-19.
- There is no national strategy for the arts, culture, and creative sector. This is needed for various reasons, one of them being accountability.
- COVID-19 continues to impact access for different communities, such as rangatahi, and this impacts wellbeing.
- Access also includes the internet and the digital space, which is not a one-size-fits-all medium.
- Manatū Taonga Ministry of Culture and Heritage has submissions open for their Long Term Insights Briefing – this is an avenue to directly address questions about wellbeing and strategy.

### **Links and resources provided from the chat**

- <https://mch.govt.nz/long-term-insights-briefing-cultural-sector>
- Te Whakawhirinaki Kete, <https://tewhakawhirinakikete.squarespace.com/>
- Great resources developed post earthquake, now part of a national mental health promotion campaign: [www.allright.org.nz](http://www.allright.org.nz)
- Te Ora Auaha Website: [www.creativewellbeingnz.org.nz](http://www.creativewellbeingnz.org.nz)

## Reflection

**Chantelle** started a round-table reflection, taking one of Huia's four pātai used at Ngā Rangatahi Toa, which was "Today I will..." We all shared what we planned to do that day.

**Eynon** closed the hui with a whakataukī which held relevance to our kōrero: "He aroha whakatō he aroha puta mai" - If kindness is sown, kindness shall be received. He closed the hui with karakia whakamutunga.

## Actions

- **Borni** to create and distribute a live document with links and resources that can be used by the network and beyond for Hauora, we have yet to decide if this resource will be shared outside of the network
- **Borni** to distribute tools around the gratefulness space and links to Te Whare Hauora (Taurima Vibes initiative with Changing Minds and Mind and Body)
- **Huia** to share the four 'check-in' questions used at Ngā Rangatahi Toa
- Follow up on working group around Manatū Taonga Ministry of Culture and Heritage's Long-term Insights Briefing If you are interested in being a part of that working group, please contact **Jane** by email at [jane@tetaumatatoiaiwi.org.nz](mailto:jane@tetaumatatoiaiwi.org.nz)

## Transcript

**Borni:** Ata mārie e te whānau, ka mihi atu ki a koutou i tēnei rā. Ko wai au? Ko Borni Te Rongopai Tukiwaho tōku ingoa. Ki te taha o tōku pāpā: Ko Maungapōhatu te maunga, ko Ōhinemataroa te awa, ko Mataatua te waka, ko Tuhoe te iwi, ko Ngāti Raka te hapū, ko Taitaitēhape te marae, ko Tutakangahau toku tipuna. Ki te taha o tōku māmā: Ko Maungapōhatu te maunga, ko Ōhinemataroa te awa, ko Mataatua te waka, ko Tuhoe te iwi, ko Te Whānau Pani te hapū, ko Micky rāua, ko Mataaopata ōku tīpuna. E tipu wai au ki a Rotorua o tērā, nō Rotorua ahau.

Mōrena, my name is Borni Te Rongopai Tukiwaho. I am the director of Auckland Fringe Festival and Kaiwhakahaere Matua of Taurima Vibes, which is my own broker ship company. I wear multiple hats but over the last eight years, most of that has been immersed or brokered amongst the art space and in the mental health or hauora space. I've cultivated my focus around what it means to look after ourselves so that we can then look after those that we support within our arts space. And when I'm talking about the art space, I don't just mean performing arts; I come with a singing and acting background; that's how I started as an artist. But my focus is looking at our whole landscape. So, everyone, good morning.

**Chantelle:** Myself, Borni and Jane had a couple of hui online to unpack avenues we could go down; we focused on lockdown and nurturing hauora and what that might mean in the arts and culture and creative sector. And then, as part of that kōrero, Borni dropped this line that Jane and I jumped all over, and it was around Mana Motuhake, Tino Rangatiratanga and your own autonomy; about being in control of when we stop. So, the fundamental of that started with the question; what does hauora mean? So Borni, from your perspective, what does hauora mean? What does it look like?

**Borni:** Ka pai. What I'd like to do before moving forward, for those of you who I haven't met before or who have no idea why it's me that's talking, I'll just give you a little bit of background of where I started. I lived overseas for about 21 years and then I returned to Aotearoa. My whānau are in the art space, I'm part of the whānau for Te Pou theatre, and my brother is really immersed in the in the art space, so I was lucky enough to come back with a solid foundation. But one of the things that I've always done is led a life where I enjoy being a part of a space of support, and when I first got back to Aotearoa one of the things that I decided to do was to work alongside marginalized communities. So, I was working with my friends at Flock, who worked with the Auckland City Mission, and we created a theatre company for those living rough so that was my first step into what's happening around Aotearoa when I first came back. Whilst we were building Te Pou Theatre, I started to navigate what it meant for me to be an artist and what I was seeing regarding the needs around me.

One of the first kōrero that I had that helped me to navigate forward was with Elizabeth, who is in our hui today. Elizabeth helped me to understand that it's not about just navigating for myself but understanding what the navigation is for the support spaces that I sit in. I started seeing a lot of my friends and colleagues in the arts space, this was about eight years ago, who were really impacted by their health and mental health. There were a lot of stories or pieces of art that were being created, in response to how people were feeling.

There was no foundation or support available. People were creating pieces, they were getting excited, there were lots of fireworks but once the fireworks died down, so then did the support space, and so then people had to scramble around to find support for themselves. The conversation was different years ago as well, I knew of people who wouldn't get jobs because they were honest about their health issues or their mental health journeys, I knew of people who were not considered for work. The conversation was quite interesting. Even within the funding space, the idea of mental health and hauora were separated into two siloed spaces so it was very difficult to figure out how to be able to bring the two together.

We now know that the art is vital to our hauora and our enjoyment and how we can breathe in in the art space. We are vital to our landscape and our economy as well. So, it was a long journey, but I sit now in the fact that my journey, my reo journey as well, has helped me to understand the space of Hauora, coming back to the essence of everything. If we break down the word: Hauora; Hau meaning vitality, Ora to mean being alive. It's around looking at what it is that we can use to vitalise our spaces and not come from a deficit space. Not look at illness, not look at the spaces that historically, we started from before, so for me it's around what does our sliding scale look like, where do we sit on that and how can we support each other to understand how that scale can be used as a connection tool. Pai!

**Chantelle:** I'm going to ask that question around the sliding scale and diving in that space. From your perspective or through your lens, what do you think that could look like? What might it look like from the kōrero that you've had with different artists in the sector?

**Borni:** It's very individual. I feel that as humans, our lived experiences exist in a human experience and as humans we will always sit on a sliding scale of happiness, sadness, whatever we want to call it, and it just depends on what the day is or what our experience has been, individually or historically. It's nice for us to understand this, it helps us to bring us more towards a median. The measure is different for every single person, and this is where the idea of autonomy comes in. With the support and the spaces around us coming back to the idea of tikanga, Mātauranga Māori, ngā whānau, the idea of who surrounds us to help support us, works for me. Understanding where my middle ground is helps me to understand how I can then support those around me.

I come from a whānau where my mum has taught me what it means to have kindness and generosity. My mom was a counselor, and because I don't have those specific qualifications, I stepped outside of the art space for a few years, and I worked with in the mental health sector so I could really understand some different types of tools; to this day I still weave in and out of that. I'm in Te Hiringa o Hauora, which is the health promotion agency on the National Māori Mental Health Advisory panel and that helps to have a good balance of perspective. Our hauora space in general, in my opinion, is still a construct, and the construct is modelled around and sits on top of systemic racism, sits on top of systemic colonisation. I don't think that's the only thing that exists, but it exists and the idea of how to dismantle all these problematic spaces is still being sought. What I choose to do is use te Ao Māori and tikanga to help inform me what it means to hold a space, to help inform me what it means to look after others. One of the things I'm still learning is how to look after me. And to take the idea that looking after yourself is selfish and remodel and reframe that kōrero. Ultimately when we sit in

leadership spaces, when we sit in places of holding, it's the most selfless thing you can do; to understand where you sit on the sliding scale and how you can look after yourself to keep yourself strong.

**Chantelle:** What are some of the practical tools that whānau could use in that space? There's a whole dialogue that if you're taking care of yourself like you said, we're being selfish so what are some of those tools that might be useful for some of our whānau on the zoom today?

**Borni:** It's difficult because we sit in this space, especially with COVID, we sit in places where we feel that we need to push ourselves harder, to make sure that the people we're looking after are okay. I think one of the biggest tools is to allow yourself to breathe into your space, allow yourself moments to step away. One of the things I think we tend to do as leaders in the arts is to advocate to really work in force. But what we don't allow ourselves, the time to do is sit in and breathe; to whakatau. We use whakatau in our processes we whakawhanaungatanga, we use that idea of settling. You know 'Tau', means to settle and one of the largest tools we can give ourselves is understanding what it means to settle before we move forward. I live at the top of Pit Street behind K Road and so I go for a walk every day but yesterday I walked out onto K Road, and I looked at the street and I turned around and came home again. There were too many people on the streets, and I was starting to feel that anxiety. I think it's just in the moment, understanding different tools. Everyone knows themselves well enough to know what their, for want of a better word, triggers are and instead of fearing the triggers, figure out what we can do to help mitigate all those things. Often, I think that's just understanding what we can in control of in the moment. What are the things that we can forecast so we can help ourselves to feel like we're in balance, settled and in control?

**Chantelle:** When we're in that space of breathing, taking care of ourselves, whether that's exercise, whether exercise is the thing that settles you, whether it's making art, being creative that settles you. What are some of the other kōrero or supports in your experience, that our whānau here might be able to offer to their wider networks or even in their own whānau themselves. What are some of the websites or links?

**Borni:** There's a few things that jumped to mind, but I think what I can do is kind of link all those things together. We all have to deal with funding at some point in time and lately, with the arts grant spaces, there was an email that was sent out asking for another document after the arts grants had closed and for me that's sent up a bit of stress, and to stop myself from stressing what I did was I created a document for my rōpū that I was able to submit but to even help me further, I let everyone that I knew know that I'm happy to share that with them, to share my mahi with those who may be struggling as well. And that was a condensed COVID-19 contingency plan. It's not one that's given by the government, it's just by me knowing all the different resources. But that also helped me to feel like I was doing something which helped me to feed myself as well. What I can do is put a little document together that may be helpful for everybody, and everyone can just kind of feed into that as they wish.

**Chantelle:** Has anyone got any thoughts they'd like to share or pātai that you may have?

**Huia:** We use a couple of really simple tools, from our governance all the way, through to our rangatahi, and we do a check in process and it's just four questions that we ask our young people and our board to be able to go deep quite quickly. It's through our social media, we've used it through our mental health campaigns that I'm happy to share it with you guys; the first question is about self-care, so "what you've done to look after yourself?", the second one is about gratitude, "something you're grateful for", the third is "the world looks better when..." and the fourth is about setting intention, so "today I will..." To give you a little bit of background, I came out of the mental health having worked for the Mental Health Foundation and as a health promoter around building resilience. When I came into Ngā Rangatahi Toa there was a big gap around that, especially for our creative artists going back into the sector, so it was about looking into how we look after and create communities of caring with simple tools of the "how" and how to be able to do it in 5 minutes. But you're setting your intentions for the whole day. We've been doing this for about four years with our rangatahi and our board and we've found it effective. We've tweaked it a little bit. But in saying that, it's something that a lot of people, a lot of organisations have picked up because of the simplicity of the tool. So, I'll send it to you guys. It's got the purpose of self-care or having gratitude and just something. Sometimes with our babies that something like, I had a shower, or I got a new cut. It doesn't have to be big. Then we move onto the how and we talk a little bit around the selfless versus selfish and about giving ourselves permission to be OK with that space.

**Borni:** I do have another tool that's around the gratefulness space as well, so I'll link as soon as Huia's shared hers. I will link the one that I know to that to help to kind of support. A couple of things that Taurima Vibes is doing now, we've got a strong relationship with Changing Minds and Mind and Body which are two mental health organizations. A few years ago, we created an initiative called Whare te Hauora; it's a peer support space for artists, and since COVID it's been dormant, but we're now back in kōrero about what we can do. It's a koha space for peer support for anyone across the country to be able to connect to an artist, to connect to Mind and Body peer support workers. There's very little paperwork that you have to get through, but there is some. In this document that we create, I'll put a little bit of kōrero around that, and that's something, once it goes live again, we can start sharing with everybody's network as well.

**Elizabeth:** Yesterday I was in a Q theater stakeholders hui and the focus of that was very much on COVID-19, and looking at it from a new perspective, which is around the responsibility that the sector has for mandating wellness and health through masking and vaccination, and what at the end of the day, the sector will do to ensure that workers and audiences are safe. The other question that came up in hui was what responsibility we as leaders have to those independent artists who are caught up in this, who are having shows cancelled and who in other ways are really struggling. Being healthy within oneself to tackle these bigger concerns, I absolutely get that. I respect that as a practice in my own daily life and work. But I always try and think about, well, how does this ripple into the bigger issues that we're facing, no more so than now. One of the things that came up in this hui yesterday was that many organisations in our sector are going to lead the charge and not wait for government to act. So, I'm just putting that out there because stress levels are gonna go up, when it becomes clear that organisations are going to require individuals engaging with their organisations to be vaccinated.

**Chantelle:** Those are some good questions. I'm wondering if that might be a discussion that we can have later. I think there's a lot of artists there in that situation, independent artists that aren't part of bigger organizations that will be struggling in their space, and even that conversation around vaccinations and masks, and I think Borni is leading a project that is leaning into that space. And I think there will be more information that will roll out in the next couple of weeks or so, so keep your eyes glued for that. Alison's also pointing people towards resources that can be found on the [Mental Health Foundation website](#), through the [Te Ora Auaha website](#).

**Borni:** The idea of action is what we need in general, right? There's a lot of kōrero, there's a lot of research but in the spaces that matter, the action is not there. My concern regarding those larger spaces, there's a disparity I see between our grassroots and non-funded organisations. I see there's a disparity in there; how do we make sure that those who don't have loud voices still get to have a voice amongst all the ideas of how we move forward? I don't know the answer to that, but I think we have to keep thinking about the gap. I feel very confident that I'm someone who sits in the middle on both sides of it. I think we have to keep asking ourselves, if we have a voice, who are we talking to outside of our large organisations? Coming back to Huia's and her babies (rangatahi), our whānau, the people on the streets, those artists that don't have the voices, who all these decisions impact.

**Chantelle:** I'll hand it over to you, Borni. If there's any last thoughts or that you might want to share with anyone.

**Borni:** So just thank you everybody. As I said at the beginning, I'm not a counselor or psychologist. I am someone who works in this space, and I have gratitude for all of those who have supported me to help get to a place where I'm able to support and hold spaces. Also thank you to me for all the study that I've done over the last 10 years, because I've been to university four times since I turned 40 and it's not been easy. So, thanking me. It's a lovely opportunity to be a part of these kōrero so thank you all for listening and for being here today, kia ora koutou.

**Chantelle:** It's a big thing to talk to in such a short time. It's something that affects everybody and bringing your own knowledge, your own experience to this rōpū, I really appreciate it and I just want to acknowledge that. Allison has put in a lot of links inside the chat as well, so check out the chat. And just we'll keep it alive as a living document, so if anything comes to mind when you're reading through it, add those things onto the document as well. Tēnā koe aku mihi ki a koe, Borni.