

THE MOUNTAIN & ME

PART ONE: THE MOUNTAIN

For a long time, me and my brothers, we Mataoho people, were alone. They were fierce times, as we grumbled our family objections, jostled for power, raged and spilled our tempers into the waters, and upon the land at our feet. Maungataketake was a tall, strong, tuakana. Big brother was a great promontory — Mataoho's nose —

Te Ihu o Mataoho. At the other end of our close family, Waitomokia squatted widely, arms crossed and forming a ring. People called him shallow but this was just his constitution. Maungataketake and I were tall, nearly as great as our close cousin Māngere across the shallow basin. Tuakana Māngere held his own in the wider family, important and regarded as Mataoho's forehead - Te Pane o Mataoho. My teina, Pukeiti, was always the runt of the family. But when the settlers came from the Manukau a long time distant, he drew an important guest. Since then he has been most favoured, with a strong spiritual side. My little brother earned the name Puketaapapatanga a Hape. He remains small and important.

The first people that came from the sea have never left us. They made their homes on my warm lower slopes, tidying my angry messes to garden and nourish the many groups who became dependent on my increasingly gentle nature and nurturing side. My family have stood where the whenua meets the Manukau harbour, since long before the time of these human people. We remain here, somewhat sheltered by Te Motu a Hiaroa, Puketutu, and bearing up to the sou-wester whipping through the Heads. Our presence, like that wind, should be as predictable as every dawn.

The people that came in the larger boats from the west have tidied my stone messes too, building warm grey walls that dawdle across my belly. Soon came the beasts, and my fertile slopes sustained and nourished the new people too. Later these settlers would be much less gentle in their acquisitions, nibbling away at tiny Pukeiti, and chipping off and carting away our mighty tuakana Maungataketake. His great energy remains legible in his fossil forest. And when the people speak his name, we remember his nature — everlasting. The gravels of lowly Waitomokia now warm the roots of vines, and his presence is subtle in the landscape. Me, I am Ōtuataua of course. The settler's girl Elsie loved to ride up my slopes, her horse the only beast nimble enough to reach my summit. But I'm no longer mighty. In the last century, just a sigh in my lifetime, I have been reduced to a third of my greatness. I have gained mana back, with carefully placed stones, and as the people tell my stories. Recently, I acquired a shady grove of avocados, and I enjoy feeling the visitors climb among them in the harvest months.

My brothers and I are still here, and thanks to our human people, we are not forgotten. We're remembered in story and song. The people have been banished at times, but they have never really left us.

Ask our people, Te Wai o Hua, of the pā village at Ihumātao and beyond, to tell you our stories.

PART TWO: ME

This text, like the artworks in the exhibition Te Ihu o Mataoho, is a personal artistic response to the whenua of the Ihumātao peninsular, Māngere. I have spent many thoughtful days walking the lower slopes of Ōtuataua mountain, and the Stonefields Historic Reserve learning from oral histories and from reading the land. I have driven the roads built on the stone quarried from Maungataketake and Ōtuataua. At nearby Auckland Airport, I have taxied on the runway made of these spoils. Ihumātao is an internationally recognised historical, geological and spiritual landscape, showing rare traces of human settlement in Aotearoa New Zealand over the last thousand years. Yet, a housing development threatens to irrevocably degrade this landscape. I have been privileged to hear some of the stories of the mana whenua of Ihumātao. I can speak from my own relationship to this landscape, but I cannot speak for their maunga. With mana whenua encouragement, I have participated in the SOUL campaign to protect Ihumātao: its open space, its mountains, and its heritage. As a pākehā, whose settler family first sailed into the Manukau Harbour in 1860s, I know I have so much to learn from the people who whakapapa here. The people that belong to the Tūpuna Maunga can tell us all much about ourselves and this land. Protect Ihumātao.

Paula Booker

ST PAUL ST GALLERY ONE
22 APRIL – 27 MAY 2016

TE IHU O MATAOHO

Te Ihu o Mataoho has been made by
Rebecca Hobbs in collaboration with:

Cat Ruka
David Veart
Fiona Jack
Kahu Tuwhare
Karamia Muller
Louisa Afoa
Martin Awa Clarke Langdon
Moana Waa
Molly Rangiwai-McHale
Paula Booker
Qiane Matata-Sipu
Ralph Brown
Tosh Ahkit

With the support of SOUL and Te Wai o Hua

Paula's text (over) was stylistically inspired by
Another Tree by Maddie Leach, written from
the perspective of an oak tree. Published
in *g. bridle. the Retreat* ST PAUL St (2014)

1. *Puketaapapa* Louisa Afoa, Qiane Matata-Sipu, Rebecca Ann Hobbs
Kaupapa: Performing the pathway that Hape made to the maunga from the moana.
2. *SOUL* Fiona Jack
[SOUL banner to be taken to Ihumātao]
3. *Ōtuataua* Cat Ruka, Tosh Ahkit, Rebecca Ann Hobbs
(Under the guidance of Brendan Corbett, Maiti Tamariki, Raureti Korako and the Ruka whānau with Kiara Ruka and Lucia-Bluebell Kahukōwhai Davison).
Talismans from Ōtuataua carry namesakes of tūpuna who voyaged from Hawaiiki to Aotearoa on the Matahourua waka. These talismans have inspired an investigation into new ways of teaching, learning and embodying whakapapa. The artists choreograph and teach a series of accessible 'power-moves' each one having a particular tupuna of Matahourua encoded within its physicality. It is hoped that all people including our young children will have fun learning and performing the power-moves, thus breathing life into our ancestors' names once again.
4. *Te Ihu o Mataoho* Karamia Muller, Moana Waa, Qiane Matata-Sipu, Rebecca Ann Hobbs
Kaupapa: He mahere tēnei o ngā kōrero tuku iho na te mana whenua o Ihumātao. (Kei te whakaatu tēnei mahere ki te whenua a muri i tēnei whakaaturanga.)
Relationally mapping indigenous narratives as instructed by the mana whenua of Ihumātao. (Map to be installed back on the whenua after the exhibition.)
5. *Maungataketake* Martin Awa Clarke Langdon, Rebecca Ann Hobbs
(Camera operator Ralph Brown)
Kaupapa: Thinking about perspective, proximity and connection whilst vainly rebuilding Maungataketake one absurd step at a time.
6. *Waitomokia* Molly Rangiwai-McHale, Rebecca Ann Hobbs
Kaupapa: Reflecting on the tasting notes of what was and is Waitomokia.
7. *Ihumātao* David Veart, Rebecca Ann Hobbs
(Camera operator Ralph Brown)
8. *Human chain* SOUL —
Save Our Unique Landscape Campaign
Documentation of the human chain protest action 13 March 2016.
9. *The Mountain and Me* written by Paula Booker
Design by Shane Fairhall