Music, Dance and the Archive

Edited by Amanda Harris,
Linda Barwick and Jakelin Troy

Music, Dance and the Archive

INDIGENOUS MUSIC, LANGUAGE AND PERFORMING ARTS

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We acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands on which Sydney University Press is located, the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, and we pay our respects to the knowledge embedded forever within the Aboriginal Custodianship of Country.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised this publication contains names and images of people who have died.

Contents

List of figures ix
List of tables xii
Editors' preface and acknowledgements xiii
About the contributors xv
List of abbreviations xix

1 Embodied culture and the limits of the archive 1
Amanda Harris, Linda Barwick and Jakelin Troy

2 "I'll show you that manyardi": Memory and lived experience in the performance of public ceremony in Western Arnhem Land 15
Reuben Brown and Solomon Nangamu

3 Ruatepupuke II: A Māori meeting house in a museum 39
Jack Gray and Jacqueline Shea Murphy

4 Animating cultural heritage knowledge through songs: Museums, archives, consultation and Tiwi music 55
Genevieve Campbell, Jacinta Tipungwuti, Amanda Harris and Matt Poll

5 The body is an archive: Collective memory, ancestral knowledge, culture and history 79
Rosy Simas

6 Reanimating 1830s Nyungar songs of Miago 93
Clint Bracknell

7 Authenticity and illusion: Performing Māori and Pākehā in the early twentieth century 117
Marianne Schultz

8 Bodies of representation and resistance: Archiving and performing culture through contemporary Indigenous theatre in Taiwan 137
Chi-Fang Chao

9 Mermaids and cockle shells: Innovation and tradition in the "Diyama" song of Arnhem Land 157
Jodie Kell and Cindy Jinmarabynana

Index 184

List of figures

Figure 1.1 Performance at Mutong of Ngarigu Snow Song. From left to right: Amanda Harris, Jacinta Tobin, Lara Troy-O'Leary, Linda Barwick, Peter Waples-Crowe, and Jakelin Troy. Photo by Toby Martin. 3

Figure 2.1 Warruwi, South Goulburn Island. Photo by Reuben Brown. 16

Figure 2.2 The group at Amartjitpalk performing manyardi, Goulburn Island, 2012. From left to right: Brendan Marrgam, Sam Wees, Russell Agalara, Maurice Gawayaku and his son, Micky Yalbarr (didjeridu), Solomon Nangamu, Harold Warrabin. Photo by Reuben Brown. 18

Figure 2.3 Photo of Joseph Gamulgiri (left) and his son Harold Warrabin (right). Photo of Gamulgiri held by Martpalk Arts and Crafts (original photographer unknown); photo of Harold Warrabin by Martin Thomas. 23

Figure 2.4 Song text of MK02. 26

Figure 2.5 Music transcription of vocal part of MK02, performed by John Guwadbu "No. 2" and Joseph Gamulgiri in 1964 SAA-B-06-MK02.mp3. 26

Figure 2.6 Music transcription of vocal part of MK02, performed by Harold Warrabin and Solomon Nangamu in 2006, transposed down a major 2nd from G to F. 27

Figure 2.7 Music transcription of vocal part of MK02, performed by Warrabin and Nangamu in 2012. 28

Figure 2.8 Music transcription of vocal melody of MP04 (nigi), performed by Solomon Ganawa in 2006, transposed up major 2nd from 20060613IB-06-MP03_MP04. 30

Figure 2.9 Music transcription of Solomon Nangamu's version of MP04nigi. 31

Figure 2.10 Solomon Nangamu and Russell Agalara's inheritance of the Mirrijpu songset. 32

Figure 2.11 Music transcription of Marrwakara songs MK01 and MK02 "joined together", performed by Harold Warrabin at Amartjitpalk, 2012 RB2-20121103-RB_01_03_MK01_MK02.wav. 35

Figure 3.1 Jack Gray wearing his father's painting overalls entering Ruatepupuke II, while video repeats its welcome, at Field Museum, Chicago. Photo by Jacqueline Shea Murphy. 40

Figure 3.2 Dancers assembled to represent the way manuhiri (visitors) are traditionally welcomed to greet the house, from afar and awaiting a call. Photo by Jacqueline Shea Murphy. 48

Figure 3.3 Dancers crossing the atea (the area directly in front of the house is symbolic of the atua named Tūmatauenga – the entity of warfare and human conflict) a spatial threshold evoked during the process of cultural protocol, or pōwhiri. Photo by Jacqueline Shea Murphy. 49

Figure 3.4 Jack Gray physically responding to the inner architecture of Ruatepupuke II as a way of spiritually embodying the carvings and woven universe. Photo by Jacqueline Shea Murphy. 50

Figure 3.5 Jack and dancers performing at Jackalope Theatre, 30 August 2017. Two days of rehearsals, embodying the experiences felt in and around the city, and sharing movement transferred from I Moving Lab's pick-up projects around the world. Photo by Jacqueline Shea Murphy. 52

Figure 3.6 Post-rehearsal pre-performance release, exploring Skikako (Chicago) as part of I Moving Lab's I LAND project. Photo by Jacqueline Shea Murphy. 53

Figure 4.1 1948 Botanic Gardens corroboree – still from film *Darwin – Doorway to Australia* (1949). 64

Figure 4.2 Regina Portaminni and Irene Babui, pictured in Richard Beattie, "Aboriginal Girls to Dance in Sydney", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 March 1970. 70

Figure 4.3 Gemma Munkara and Katrina Mungatopi viewing the Tiwi display; Chau Chak Wing Museum, May 2021. 75

Figure 5.1 Rosy Simas tearing up an oversized Seneca Reservation relocation map during a performance of *We Wait In The Darkness*. Photo by Steven Carlino for Rosy Simas Danse, 2015. 89

Figure 5.2 Installation of fabric and paper of Seneca relocation maps for a traditional Seneca dress design, *We Wait In The Darkness* exhibition view, All My Relations Arts in Minneapolis. Photo by Rosy Simas, 2014. 90

Figure 5.3 Rosy Simas in an excerpt of *We Wait In The Darkness* at the Judson Memorial Church. Photo by Ian Douglas, 2015. 90

Figure 6.1 Nyungar song lyrics about Miago in the papers of Sir George Grey. 100

Figure 6.2 Melody for the Nyungar "ship song" about Miago. 111

Figure 6.3 Melody for the Nyungar "sail song" about Miago. 111

Figure 7.1 "Maoriland Love Song", words by Dora Wilcox; music by J. Alexander. London: Beal, Stuttard & Co., 1912. 124

Figure 7.2 "The only white woman interpreting the unusual folk lore of the Maori people", Miss Bathie Stuart. 132

Figure 8.1 *Sai Shi* (*Game and Play*) in *Taiwan Fan She Tu* (*Pictures of the Savage Villages in Taiwan*, 1820). 143

Figure 8.2 A postcard illustrating Taiwanese Indigenous peoples (possibly the Rukai) dancing. Photo taken anonymously sometime in the Japanese colonising period, around the 1920s. 145

Figure 8.3 The scene of an Atayal mother holding her son, who fought against the Japanese colonising force, from "The Flaming Sun" in *Pu'ing: Searching for the Atayal Route.* Photo by FASDT. 151

Figure 9.1 Language map of the Manayingkarírra (Maningrida) region (2016). Courtesy of Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation, Maningrida College and Batchelor Institute. Map by Brenda Thornley. 161

Figure 9.2 Map of An-barra significant sites. The map shows the Burarra language groups An-barra, Martay and Marawuraba (these two groups tend to call themselves Martay), and Maringa (also known as Gulula). 162

Figure 9.3 Diyama shells (*Tapes hiantina*) of the marrambai or "black duck" pattern with radiating dark bars across the shell. This is differentiated from the an-gedjidimiya or "whistle duck" pattern. Photo by Jodie Kell. 163

Figure 9.4 Members of the Ripple Effect Band and families hunting for diyama on the Na-kara estate of Na-meyarra. From left to right: Rona Lawrence, Marita Wilton, Zara Wilton and Tara Rostron. Photo by Jodie Kell. 164

Figure 9.5 Mary Dadbalag (left) and her daughter, Cindy Jinmarabynana, discussing the story of "Diyama". Photo by Jodie Kell. 167

Figure 9.6 The Ripple Effect Band performing "Diyama" at the Darwin Festival in 2020. From left to right: Jodie Kell, Jolene Lawrence, Marita Wilton, Lakita Taylor (Stephanie's daughter) and Stephanie Maxwell James. Photo by Benjamin Warlngundu Bayliss. 169

Figure 9.7 David Maxwell (left) on stage with his daughter, Stephanie Maxwell James (right), at the Bak'bididi Festival in Ramingining in 2017. Behind is Rona Lawrence on bass guitar and Tara Rostron on electric guitar. Photo by Eve Pawley. 175

Figure 9.8 David's vocals (highlighted) in the middle section of the Ripple Effect Band's recording of "Diyama". Transcription by Jodie Kell. 179

Figure 9.9 Mulumbuk's original "Diyama" song recorded in 1960. Transcription by Jodie Kell, based on transcription by Aaron Corn. 180

List of tables

Table 2.1 Summary of recordings of Marrwakara/Mularrik (M: goanna/green frog) and Mirrijpu (M: seagull) at Goulburn Island and Gunbalanya. 24

Table 2.2 Comparison of the three recordings of MK02. Table shows Melodic Sequence (MS) number, scale degrees of the melodic sequence, and corresponding Text Phrase (A, a, B, b, etc.). 28

Table 6.1 Records of Nyungar song 1837–1986. 95

Table 9.1 Documented representations of the "Diyama" song and/or story. This does not include many informal and unrecorded ceremonial performances such as the opening of the local health clinic, school concerts and festivals. 172

Table 9.2 "Diyama" (Transcription by Stephanie Maxwell James, Jodie Kell and Margaret Carew). 176

Editors' preface and acknowledgements

This book is an output of a four-year project on which the editors (and several chapter authors) have collaborated since 2018. Our project *Reclaiming Performance Under Assimilation in Southeastern Australia, 1935–75* was funded by the Australian Research Council's Discovery Project Scheme from 2018 to 2022 (DP180100943). It arose from conversations between Amanda Harris, Linda Barwick, Rachel Fensham, Tiriki Onus, Jakelin Troy, Jacqueline Shea Murphy, Matt Poll, Lyndon Ormond-Parker and Sally Treloyn about histories of the resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their practices of performing music and dance that deserve to be more widely known. We devised a project around detailed archival research, collaborative sharing and workshopping of materials, and creative methods of recuperation and reconnection. This book brings together some of the creative and scholarly work that has resulted.

Along with our initial project collaborators, we extend our thanks for research support to Sharon Huebner, Adnan Bhatti, Mujahid Torwali, Mahesh White-Radhakrishnan, and especially to Laura Case, whose editorial assistance has been vital to shaping this book. We also thank collaborators on workshops and engagement with archives over the course of the project: Adnan Bhatti, Lou Bennett, Tim Bishop, Nerida Blair, John Casey, Cameron Davison, Jason Fieldhouse, Luke Forbes, Payi Linda Ford and Emily Tyaemaen Ford, Shannon Foster, Michelle Francis, Dennis Fuller, Kaisi Fuller, Selme Fuller, Jennie Ginger, Anna Haebich, Lisa Haldane, Kevin Hunt, Carole Johnson, Regina Kantilla, Anthea Kerinaiua, Jo Kinniburgh, Cathy Mandile, Allan Marett, Sarah Muller, Francis Orsto, Gregoriana Parker, Frances Therese Portaminni, Jonathon Potskin, Augusta Puangatji, Nardi Simpson, Joe Sproats, Judy Sproats, Jacinta Tipungwuti, Jacinta Tobin, Lara Troy-O'Leary, Peter Waples-Crowe, Therese Webster. We thank Sydney University Press's editorial team Susan Murray, Jo Lyons, Nathan Grice and Naomi van Groll, Series Editor Myfany Turpin, and the peer reviewers whose expert comments helped to refine the volume. Finally, we thank all of the contributors to

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A note on language and style

Throughout this book we capitalise terms Indigenous, Aboriginal, Native, Country, Elders, Dreaming, and render words in Indigenous languages in roman font (not-italicised), except where they are rendered as glosses on the main text.

About the contributors

Linda Barwick is a researcher and writer whose interests include nurturing creativity, honouring intergenerational wisdom and promoting diversity of thought and compassionate action. She enjoys gardening, bridge, grandchildren and cats, and is Emeritus Professor at Sydney Conservatorium of Music, University of Sydney, and a Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities.

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Chi-Fang Chao is a senior lecturer in the Department of Dance at the University of Roehampton, London. She has been trained in anthropology and dance studies. Her research interests include the anthropological study of ritual and dance, dance ethnography in Okinawa, Japan, and reflexive/post-colonial dance theatre of Indigenous people in Taiwan. She was invited to cooperate with the Formosan Aboriginal Song and Dance Troupe in producing two works of contemporary Indigenous people's dance and music theatre: *Pu'ing: Search for the Atayal Route* (2013) and *Ma'ataw: The Floating Island* (2016), both committed by the Council of Indigenous People and premiered in the National Theatre in Taiwan.

Amanda Harris is an Australian Research Council Future Fellow at Sydney Conservatorium of Music, University of Sydney, and Director of the Sydney Unit of digital archive Pacific and Regional Archive for Digital Sources in Endangered Cultures (PARADISEC). Amanda is interested in hearing the voices of those often excluded from conventional music histories through collaborative research focused on gender and intercultural musical cultures. Her monograph *Representing Australian Aboriginal Music and Dance 1930–70* was published by Bloomsbury Publishing in 2020.

Born in Auckland, Aotearoa, **Jack Gray** is a founding member and the Artistic Director of Atamira Dance Company since 2018. His independent arts practice engages diverse audiences in community-centred spaces of Indigenous knowledge exchange, such as Cultural Informance Lab (California), Transformance Lab (New York), I Moving Lab (USA, Australia, NZ), Indigenous Dance Forum (New York), I LAND (Hawaii, Seattle, Portland, Chicago, New York), Intentional Indigenous Artform Exchange (New York) and more. He was a Visiting Assistant Professor at University of California Riverside, Artist in Residence at New York University's Asian/Pacific/American Institute, Regents Scholar at UCLA World Arts and Cultures/Dance.

Cindy Jinmarabynana is a Marrarrich/Anagawbama clan woman from the An-barra language group of Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory of Australia. Her outstation is Ji-bena and she is a cultural manager for Gupanga. She lives in the Western Arnhem Land community of Maningrida, where she is a teacher and Lúrra Language and Culture team member at Maningrida College. She is co-chair of the Northern Land Council's Learning on Country Steering Committee, and a director of Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation. Cindy is a dedicated mother and grandmother who is passionate about passing on language and knowledge for future generations to ensure the continuity of culture.

Jodie Kell is a PhD candidate, supervised by Professor Linda Barwick and Associate Professor Myfany Turpin. She works at PARADISEC as an audio engineer and co-producer of the podcast *Toksave: Culture Talks*. Her doctoral research focuses on the role of women in music making and the dynamics of gender in the music performance space through a participatory ethnography of the Ripple Effect Band – an all-women's rock band from the Western Arnhem Land community of Maningrida of which Jodie is the band manager, co-songwriter and lead guitarist.

Matt Poll is the manager of Indigenous programs at the Australian National Maritime Museum and previously worked as Curator of Indigenous Heritage collections of the Chau Chak Wing Museum at the University of Sydney, following more than a decade as repatriation project officer at the University of Sydney. Matt played an integral part in implementing an Acknowledgement of Country built into the architecture of the new Chau Chak Wing Museum, which opened in November 2020. Matt is also currently chairperson of Orana Arts in mid-western regional

NSW and is a long-term member of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Board for Sydney's Museum of Contemporary Art.

Marianne Schultz holds a MLitt and PhD in History from the University of Auckland in addition to a MA in Performing Arts from Middlesex University, London. Marianne has danced and taught professionally in the United States and New Zealand, most recently with the Foster Group's production *Orchids*. She is the author of two books, *Performing Indigenous Culture on Stage and Screen: A Harmony of Frenzy* and *Limbs Dance Company: Dance For All People*. Her articles on dance and the performing arts have appeared in several peer-reviewed journals and in the volume *Staging the Other in Nineteenth-Century British Drama*.

Jacqueline Shea Murphy is a professor in the dance department at UC Riverside, where she teaches courses in critical dance studies and in Iyengar yoga. She is author of "*The People Have Never Stopped Dancing*": *Native American Modern Dance Histories* (University of Minnesota Press, 2007), and is founder and co-director of the Indigenous Choreographers at Riverside gathering project (https://icr.ucr.edu/). Her new book, *Dancing Indigenous Worlds: Choreographies of Relation*, is forthcoming from the University of Minnesota Press. It emerges out of relationships – including with Jack Gray – that have grown while she has been engaging with Native American and Indigenous dance in the US, Canada and Aotearoa over the past 20 years.

Rosy Simas is an enrolled member of the Seneca Nation. She is a transdisciplinary and dance artist who creates work for stage and installation. Simas' work weaves themes of personal and collective identity with family, sovereignty, equality and healing. She creates dance work with a team of Native and BIQTPOC artists, driven by movement-vocabularies developed through deep listening. Simas is a 2013 Native Arts and Cultures Foundation Choreography Fellow, 2015 Guggenheim Creative Arts Fellow, 2017 Joyce Award recipient from The Joyce Foundation, 2019 Dance/USA Fellow, 2021 Native Arts and Cultures Foundation SHIFT award recipient, 2022 USA Doris Duke Fellow, 2016 and 2022 McKnight Foundation Choreography Fellow, and multiple awardee from NEFA National Dance Project, the MAP Fund, and National Performance Network. Simas is the Artistic Director of Rosy Simas Danse and Three Thirty One Space, a creative studio for Native and BIPOC artists in Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA.

Jacinta Portaminni Tipungwuti is a senior culture woman and traditional owner of the Tiwi Islands, Northern Australia. She is a custodian and composer of the songlines of Wrangku Country on western Bathurst Island, she dances Ampiji (Rainbow) and Yirrikapayi (Crocodile) and she is a senior woman of the Lorringala (Stone) Skingroup. As a member of the Tiwi Strong Women's Group, she has performed at the Sydney and Darwin Festivals, the Sydney Opera House, the National Film and Sound Archive, and at music and language conferences around Australia.

Jakelin Troy (Jaky) is Ngarigu of the Snowy Mountains, called by Jaky's community Kunama Namadgi, in south-eastern Australia. She is Director, Indigenous Research at The University of Sydney and founded the Sydney Indigenous Research Network (https://bit.ly/3SpWQF1). Jaky is conducting research with Linda and Amanda into the use of historical records locked in the archives to support her own and other Aboriginal communities to recover and maintain language, cultural practices, performance and music. Recently she has been working with communities in north-west Pakistan to support their cultural activism as they document and share their language, music and performance.

List of abbreviations

ABC	Australian Broadcasting Corporation
AFL	Australian Football League
AGNSW	Art Gallery of New South Wales
AIAS	Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies
AIATSIS	Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies
AuSIL	Australian Society for Indigenous Languages
CAAMA	Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association
FASDT	Formosan Aboriginal Song and Dance Troupe
IFMC	International Folk Music Council
KMT	Kuomintang
LD&C	Language Documentation & Conservation
MAI	Montréal Arts Interculturals
MS	Melodic Sequence
NAA	National Archives of Australia
NFSA	National Film and Sound Archive of Australia
NGA	National Gallery of Australia
NLA	National Library of Australia
PARADISEC	Pacific and Regional Archive for Digital Sources in Endangered Cultures
PBS	Public Broadcasting Service
SLNSW	State Library of New South Wales

3

Ruatepupuke II: A Māori meeting house in a museum

Jack Gray and Jacqueline Shea Murphy

Introduction: Converging platforms – zoom in to enter the room

This is a weaving of transcripts from a Zoom call that took place on 15 May 2021 between Jack Gray, director of Atamira Dance Company in Aotearoa,[1] and Jacqueline Shea Murphy, critical dance studies professor at the University of California, Riverside, USA.[2] Our contribution to this volume is not written in the same form as most academic articles, but rather as a kōrero – a term in Te Reo Maōri that is sometimes translated into English as narration, talk, discourse, account, conversation, and is also used as a verb, or something one does.

To kōrero is to dialogue, converse, address, speak truth. The kōrero that follows is a sharing of thoughts and ideas that, like all kōrero, may or may not conclude with a clearly stated argument, and which requires from the reader active listening and trust that, in the act of our speaking together, meaning is being made. Their kōrero refers to engagements that Gray had in August 2017, with his father's ancestor/ancestral whare (house), named Ruatepupuke II, currently held in the Field Museum in Chicago, Illinois, USA. These engagements, which Shea Murphy witnessed, involved Gray and several dancers visiting with Ruatepupuke, dancing in and with it,[3] and then presenting these movement engagements in a dance work at a theatre across town in Chicago.

1 Atamira Dance Company, https://www.atamiradance.co.nz/about, accessed 19 November 2021.
2 University of California, Riverside Department of Dance, "Jacqueline Shea Murphy, Associate Professor Profile", https://dance.ucr.edu/faculty/jacqueline-shea-murphy/, accessed 19 November 2021.
3 Jack Gray, *Field Museum*, 14 April 2021, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CGEQRod_fnA, accessed 19 November 2021.

Figure 3.1 Jack Gray wearing his father's painting overalls entering Ruatepupuke II, while video repeats its welcome, at Field Museum, Chicago. Photo by Jacqueline Shea Murphy.

Mihimihi: acknowledgements and welcoming

To enter the wharenui, a recorded American voice mispronounces the following greeting on a loop:

> Kia ora! Welcome to Rua-te-pu-puke, a Māori meeting house, out of respect please take your shoes off. (Ding)
> Kia ora! Welcome to Rua-te-pu-puke, a Māori meeting house, out of respect please take your shoes off. (Ding)
> Kia ora! Welcome to Rua-te-pu-puke, a Māori meeting house, out of respect please take your shoes off. (Ding)

JSM: Hey, Jack, nice to see you! I'm here in Huichin, which is sometimes called Oakland, California, on Lisjan Ohlone territory. So delighted to talk with you in this realm of the cyberworld about archives, and dance, and Ruatepupuke. Thanks for making time for this.

JG: Kia ora, Jackie. So good to see you and to have the opportunity to explore these things. I'm looking forward to giving life to this present moment as it helps us look into what has already been and what will come.

JSM: Great. So, when discussions around archives were happening in the research group we're part of, which this volume has come out of, I kept thinking about Ruatepupuke. There have been so many vibrant discussions about archives in Indigenous studies and in dance studies. A lot of these discussions circulate around the body as an archive of knowledge, as a way of holding knowledge that hasn't been allowed into institutions such as libraries or museums or history books because it a) isn't understood for the knowledge and power that it holds, and b) if it did, it wouldn't have been wanted there. So, the body has been understood in both fields as itself a kind of archive: as a repository for knowledge, and as a location or source of it. And bodies have also been understood as active in researching the archived knowledges they hold: the body as an archive can locate what might be called historical knowledge – in what has been bodily archived. Of course, there are lots of other ways of thinking about archives in both fields too.

Objects, beings, carvings: Ruatepupuke stories

JSM: In Indigenous studies, from what I've understood from my engagements with it, there is a disconnect between how Western colonising cultures archive what are seen as objects – by putting things into museums as artefacts to be seen and preserved – and how in many Indigenous cultures, these so-called objects are known and understood to be sentient beings.[4] These are radically different ways

4 The way entities seen as "objects" are in sentient relationship (in ways outside of a Western alive/dead dichotomy) is articulated frequently and abundantly by Indigenous artists and scholars, and addressed regularly in Indigenous studies scholarship. A few (of many possible) examples include Tsimshian scholar Mique'l Askren's (now Dangeli's) discussion of the "tangible manifestations" of "supernatural power that are known as nax nox and halaayt" in Tsimshian epistemology, which are "commonly referred to as 'objects' or 'artifacts' in museum terminology" (Mique'l Askren, "Dancing Our Stone Mask Out of Confinement: A Twenty-first-Century Tsimshian Epistemology", in *In Objects of Exchange: Social and Material Transformation on Northwest Coast*, ed. Aaron Glass (New York: Bard Graduate Centre, 2011), 37). In Alutiiq artist and writer Tanya Lukin Linklater's discussion of visiting with cultural belongings from Kodiak Island and the Aleutian Chain of Alaska that have been "incarcerated or not allowed to rest" in university and museum holdings, Lukin Linklater writes how even if they "are no longer nourished within their life in their homelands, this does not negate their capacity for awareness, sentience, and agency", noting how, in travelling far distances to honour, visit and be in relation to these cultural belongings, she chooses "to look with compassion, kindness, and reverence" and to focus on how "these visits nourish them and reciprocal exchange takes place" (Tanya Lukin Linklater, "Indigenous Objects and Performance: Toward Insistence, Repair and Repatriation Otherwise in Three Parts (PhD thesis proposal, Queens University, 2020) 20, cited with permission); Osage scholar George "Tink" Tinker writes about consciousness in all beings, including rocks (George "Tink" Tinker, "The Stones Shall Cry Out: Consciousness, Rocks, and Indians", *Wicazo Sa Review* 19, No. 2 (Fall 2004)); Māori

of understanding what it is to hold knowledge, and what it is to be a being. In colonising cultures, the binary distinction between life and non-life has imposed itself onto the putting-into-museum archives of so-called objects for display and preservation. So, while museum archives see archival knowledge held in objects, not bodies, dance and Indigenous studies see the body as a site of holding what might be considered archival knowledge. Another difference lies in the varied ways of understanding what *has* been put in the museum archive. In Indigenous studies, what is put into a museum is a location of knowledge, yes, but not in the preservative contained sense that the museum might be expecting to hold it in; rather, holding knowledge in a very different way that involves a kind of sentience. And this sentience requires engagement and nourishment. So – how does this all play into what I saw and in your work with Ruatepupuke in Chicago at the Field Museum in 2017? Can I ask you to talk a bit about the story of your voyages with and to your ancestor? Then perhaps we can address some of these issues.

JG: The ancestor's story that we're going to discuss today comes from my father's side and is related to our tribal house, or wharenui. The house has a name, which is Ruatepupuke II. Now, I'll give a shortened story of the old traditions around Ruatepupuke, which is synonymous with what we now know as whakairo or carving. Our ancestor dove down into the ocean domain of Tangaroa, the god (atua) of the sea, to rescue his son who had been taken (for transgressing a sacred protocol). He returned to the world of light, to Te Ao Marama (our reality here on "earth"), holding a broken piece of the wharenui of Tangaroa. This fragment of carving informs the cosmology around our carving traditions. One of the exciting things is that these carvings depicted half-human/half-oceanic forms in the form of taniwha or guardian spirits. Under the ocean, these carvings were moving and alive and would shapeshift in and on the walls. They would speak, look and engage with everything, and be the embodied consciousness of the ocean. The carving was broken off from the house and brought up into this world. However, the carvings ceased to move, and so now we see carvings as static. They are ancestral deities, and there is a notion already that there was a transition from the realm under the

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performance scholar Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal's articulations of how "Māori knowledge builds upon and continually refers to ancestors – both human and non-human – as living presences existing beyond a metaphysical and real veil". He adds: "ancestors are also the phenomenon of the natural world" (Charles Royal Te Ahukaramū, "Ārai-te-uru: 'Through the Veil' – Traditional Māori Storytelling and Transformation". Keynote lecture at 2016 IFTR/FIRT conference, Stockholm, Sweden, 16 June 2016. https://www.iftr.org/conference/keynote-speakers, 8). See also: Kim TallBear, "Beyond the Life/Not-Life Binary: A Feminist-Indigenous Reading of Cryopreservation, Interspecies Thinking, and the New Materialisms", in *Cryopolitics: Frozen Life in a Melting World*, eds Joanna Radin and Emma Kowal (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: MIT Press, 2017), 179–202; Kim TallBear, "Caretaking Relations, Not American Dreaming", *Kalfou 6* no. 1 (2019), 24–41; and Amiria Henare, "Taonga Māori: Encompassing rights and property in New Zealand", in *Thinking Through Things: Theorising Artefacts Ethnographically*, eds Amiria Henare, Martin Holbraad and Sari Wastell (New York: Routledge, 2007), 47–67.

ocean where they had a life as opposed to the realm of humankind where they don't. So that's one story about Ruatepupuke I've learned as a result of exploring my whakapapa, or genealogy, and inherited stories of my people.

Another story is that an original wharenui (Ruatepupuke I) was built back in the day. Though there was a lot of intertribal fighting, our tribe decided to keep our carving sacred by dismantling the first house and hiding it under the mud of the riverbank (at Waipiro Bay). They tell a story that once that skirmish with the other tribe had finished, they no longer knew exactly where the carving of the first house was. They say the river changed, and the location of their carvings disappeared. They then made a second house. And this house, Ruatepupuke II, is the one that I've spent the most time contemplating and engaging and interacting with. This house was sold by a family member to a curiosity collector. They dismantled the wharenui against the tribe's wishes and took the house on a journey to London and Germany. Inside the museum the house itself was too big and was cut to accommodate the size of the exhibition room.

Wharenui from a Māori perspective: The ancestor's body

Now to discuss some elements or aspects of the wharenui from a Māori perspective. We named them after an ancestor, but they are themselves an ancestor. So we see the top of the roof that runs across the whare as the backbone. We see the rafters as the rib cage. We see and denote other aspects of how the house helps us as Māori to understand the pathway into the world and the exit out of it through life and death. To think about the ancestor's body being cut and humbled in many ways brings about emotions and feelings of distress and concern as you would imagine. The house was given to the museum after the world fair in Chicago, Illinois, and it was presented to the world alongside many other exotic gatherings (belongings) of Indigenous peoples. It was put into what is now known as the Field Museum.[5]

5 The Field Museum originated from the artefacts displayed at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition, which was produced to celebrate the 400-year anniversary of Spanish coloniser Christopher Columbus's landing in what is today called the Caribbean (John Flinn, *Official Guide to the World's Columbian Exposition, Full Information Respecting All Features of the Exposition*. Issued under authority of the World's Columbian Exposition (Chicago: The Columbian Guide Company, 1893), https://bit.ly/3uwIFno, accessed 19 November 2021). This Exposition included many exhibits and performances designed to show the superiority of whites in relation to Indigenous peoples. The Field Museum was thus founded out of an Exposition that enacted discursive and epistemic violence towards Indigenous peoples by collecting and displaying living Indigenous "artefacts" – human and more-than-human – in celebration of white supremacy and US colonisation, and in attempts to solidify US imperialism. Over the next century, the Field Museum's roots have continued to grow out of this seed. (The Field Museum, https://www.fieldmuseum.org/about, accessed 19 November 2021.) The museum's depiction of Ruatepupuke echoes colonising histories in which Indigenous people are depicted welcoming white visitors with open arms. (The Field Museum, *Maori Meeting House, Ruatepupuke II*, https://bit.ly/3ee8fZi, accessed 19 November 2021.)

It stayed inside the basement, where it was forgotten and dismantled. Decades later it was resurrected inside the museum alongside many other Indigenous people's homes and belongings, staying for a couple of decades without the tribe knowing where it had ended up and people not knowing the main stories around what this wharenui represented. In the 1980s when *Te Māori* was shown at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, it became the very first exhibition of Māori-curated Māori art internationally. It was a milestone for Indigenous art to be curated through the Indigenous lens and for our storytelling instead of a non-Indigenous perspective to bring artefacts together.[6]

Soon after the rediscovery, there were delegates from Aotearoa New Zealand, Māori museum curators, who eventually, after hearing about the house, were able to engage in a long process of figuring out what to do. The tribe decided that the house would remain in Chicago, but elements of the house would be taken to Aotearoa and reinvigorated. Things were rewoven, things were re-carved, remade and represented with the Mana or the spiritual authority, the cultural authority of our tribe in a ceremony that happened at the museum.[7]

Encounters in relationship with the Field Museum

I came into this knowledge while based in the US, particularly during a time (Spring 2015) at the Asian/Pacific/American Institute at NYU.[8] I asked myself how I could align some of the practices and processes that I was looking at regarding how we recognise land as inherently Indigenous? How do we uncover and bring forth the memories, the stories, the knowledge, the names, the ancestors in places, and how might we mitigate the sense of loss, erasure and disruption to those pathways? That exploration led me to the facilitation of several encounters in relationship with the museum. My story thread was interweaving more as a cultural facilitator, enabling and empowering different ways for institutions to be educated and informed by the communities activating around them, and was also opening doors to knowledge keepers. We discovered that there were Māori people in Chicago who have genealogical lineages to the wharenui and could bring some of those different threads together. I've always journeyed knowing that this intactness is fluid and moving and constantly shapeshifting around all the various ideas and notions of belonging, identity and power. There are stories within the body to be uncovered as a result of that reconnection. Some perspectives can render artistically

6 New Zealand History, *Te Maori Exhibition Opens in New York 10 September 1984*, https://nzhistory.govt.nz/te-Māori-exhibition-opens-in-new-york, accessed 19 November 2021.

7 New York Times, *Travel Advisory: Maori Art Comes to Chicago*, https://www.nytimes.com/1993/02/28/travel/travel-advisory-maori-art-comes-to-chicago.html?smid=url-share, accessed 18 August 2022.

8 Asian/Pacific/American Institute at New York University,*Jack Gray (2016)*, https://apa.nyu.edu/jack-gray-2016/, accessed 19 November 2021.

and creatively to support the next generation to understand what it is to have a house in another land and continue the work of thinking through institutions and methodologies of preservation, and then adding an Indigenous performative and contemporary perspective on present and future moments.

Indigenous dancers as archival activators

JSM: Thank you. That is a very beautiful and intense and complicated story, in the best way, and painful. It's painful to hear and I can see that it's painful to tell, as well as inspiring. At the end you spoke of the possibilities of it and I appreciated that as well. What I hear in what you're saying is the story of how your ancestor was turned from being something that, if I'm understanding right, was a carving that was alive – that had an aliveness in it. That aliveness was contained in the carving. But in the process of being collected by a "curiosity collector", the ancestor was transformed from being a carving-containing-aliveness, into being an archival object that could be treated as such: that could literally be objectified, and cut, and treated as a thing. You've narrated the voyages and stories of that really powerfully. What I'm also thinking about, listening to you, is how your body, as it engages with the archive the museum is holding, enacts the beingness of it again. I ask that in part because as you were telling the story over Zoom, your arms and movements were really active and the movements were beautiful. You were – it seemed to me, as you told the story of the underwater underworld and the coming into being held in a carving – yourself showing motion and movement and aliveness. So I wanted to ask about your body operating in that way, as an archival activator. Can you talk a bit about what your movement as a dancer, as it engages with the objectified ancestor collected in a museum, does? What do you see it doing? I'm also interested in the connections between what you see it doing and the way you ended your discussion: how Ruatepupuke is now doing the work of bringing knowledge, bringing support, to the next generation of tribal members. So I'm curious about both of those things: how your body engages with what it does, and what the effects of that are.

JG: Wonderful, thanks, Jackie. I'm going to start at the point before I first met the house. I remember flying very early from Newark airport to Chicago, and the feeling of butterflies inside my stomach, I actually feel it right now and it, wow, it was amazing to reconnect with that. I'm thinking about the possibility of multiple lineages coming back together again and what that feels like inside, and I guess it was a type of excitement that I was going to meet something that was already inside me and that I would have a tangible body to reflect the feelings upon. I guess it must be the same feeling when meeting family for the first time, the excitement of that balanced with the pain of that separation. The surprise of what it feels like to want a connection that you've never physically had. I remember the night before, I found it difficult to settle in myself. There are many layers and many lineages, maternal and paternal, in our understanding, working through us. Coming into

a space where the energies are at their peak velocity is an overwhelming physical (spiritual) experience. I haven't thought about all this before and so to know that I can recall this again shows it's deeply rooted. Yeah, there were a lot of tears. I felt very inconsolable, as I also thought a lot about my father, who relates to the house and who has departed this planet for quite some time (he passed away in 2003). I guess to know that the pieces could come together and the transmission that I need as a Māori man to grow could come by going to their house and having the abilities and capabilities to make that happen and the courage to make that happen was a force, an incredible physical force. My partner and I did a lot of ceremony including a lot of prayer by the water. Lake Michigan was a man-made lake which is pretty funny because it didn't look "man-made" to me, and there was washed up on the concrete a skeleton of a bird, which we wrapped in seaweed that we found. It was, I guess, a gesture of the ocean of Tangaroa (as we understand koha, or reciprocity) in a way – reclaiming those bits from under the sea to above the ocean. And then there we were taking it into this gigantic building.

Exclusionary processes and upholding tikanga

I've noticed so many times in America that the amount of security in these institutional places is quite phenomenal and brings a powerful sense of defensiveness – as if the defence is *against* you *coming into* the house. I think about this house and what it is for and that it's the body of the ancestor (inside this other house that is so unwelcoming), and I don't think people understand that because they are acclimated to homes keeping us outside. I struggle culturally to deal with those exclusionary processes (safety measures) because it's the antithesis (in Aotearoa) of what we expect when we come into relation with our ancestors. I met the house, and my first response was to express all the knowledge I was gifted growing up: sing, dance, chant, talk, and let it all pour out of me. This is making me think a lot about what is performance and what is pure expression. I'm trying to think about America's ongoing imperialism as something that usurps the agency of the house. Placing outsider thinking around a cultural object that has its own inherent world of meaning, and calling that an archive, is really limiting and complicated. Considering it as an archive doesn't take into account the living continuum of cultural relationship. The two worldviews present two different facets of relationship. So I want to throw those ideas into the mix of thinking around [the] archive to question seeing it as something static or separated, and instead suggest seeing it as something that is relative to where it is situated. My body as an archive brings about memories from ancestors past. It brings about a responsibility to uphold tikanga (or the protocols of our culture in the here and now). It supports the notion of transferring cultural thinking from so far away into a space that is already problematic because of others lack of understanding. Some themes include Indigenous sovereignty, the grieving body and desiring the reconstruction of

pathways for energy to flow. I found this feeling recognisable, and I'm sure that it would be to another Māori person doing the same thing (of asserting the Mana).

I do also want to move into some of the creative interventions that we did. I am a trained contemporary dancer used to working inside studios and theatres and spaces that are makeshift spaces for what eventually became the performance space, and the illusions created through that. I was able to go with a group of dancers (in Chicago) to explore what it meant for each of us to journey across the threshold of human conflict and meet what is most calling us to a traditional form. I suppose, in a way, from an architectural point of view, it wasn't just the "physical" house that I had to acknowledge. It was the intangible spaces outside of it, around it and before it. The grief of seeing our taonga – treasured entities with which, through intertwining lineages, one is in metaphoric and felt relation – unrepresented is felt in the emptiness in the energy around the house. When I was there as we moved in the place, people at the museum were walking and taking photos and talking loudly and doing lots of things (breaking customs) that weren't their fault. I felt a pain at that, but I understood that too, so it's tense. In many ways, my being in the space was problematic for the museum because I was inciting energy that they couldn't "control". It becomes about activism instead of intimacy, I guess, when meeting "your" body with other people's projections of an archive.

Performance cartographies: Manifesting in movements

JSM: Beautiful, Jack. Your response is gorgeous and reminds me of one of the books I've been teaching lately, called *Spiral to the Stars,* by Laura Harjo, who is a Mvskoke geographer. Harjo writes about "felt knowledge", and about how the body operates as an archive and experiences and keeps "felt knowledge" embodied in practice. Specifically referencing "knowledge produced through music and movement", Harjo writes, "Mvskoke songs and dance are acts of performance that trigger memories. They are performance cartographies that hold memories, invoking knowledge and relationality and operating to open a range of kin-space-time envelopes to dancers and listeners."[9]I feel like that was what was happening when I saw you right then, talking about Ruatepupuke: you were experiencing that felt knowledge, and it was triggering memories and manifesting in your movements. I also heard you registering the pain not only of not having access to the physical house, but also to the energies around the house – and that the house gives – that haven't been able to be accessed or supported. I have so many questions and I know we don't have a lot of time, so maybe I'll just say a couple and you can choose which ones resonate. One is about time and space. Harjo uses the term "kin-space-time envelopes". What I was hearing in your story was a kin-space-time envelope: in your

9 Laura Harjo, *Spiral to the Stars: Mvskoke Tools of Futurity* (Arizona: University of Arizona Press, 2019), 84.

Figure 3.2 Dancers assembled to represent the way manuhiri (visitors) are traditionally welcomed to greet the house, from afar and awaiting a call. Photo by Jacqueline Shea Murphy.

engagements with Ruatepupuke, a cross-temporal kinship is being activated. This kinship is felt in grieving, as you said – but there is also something in the capacity for it to be felt as grieving, that is an activation of the possibility of what actually is there. That's one thought that I had that I wondered if you might comment on. And then the other is, just maybe to ask a bit more about you bringing the dancers into that space in 2017. I was able to join you and the dancers you'd brought to the museum, and to witness as you danced in the space before and into the whare. Can you talk about going into the space, and what we were doing there? And then also, could you talk about taking what had happened with these dancers in the Field Museum, with Ruatepupuke, and a couple of days later, staging it at the Jackalope Theatre across town? I'm just wondering if you would like to say anything about that movement, and perhaps about how Harjo's idea of the kin-space-time envelope relates to the movement of you and the other dancers into the museum to dance with Ruatepupuke, and then out of the museum across town to the theatre, and then to New Zealand as you were saying earlier – back to the communities that could engage with what the energy is, even if they can't engage with the whare.

Figure 3.3 Dancers crossing the atea (the area directly in front of the house is symbolic of the atua named Tūmatauenga – the entity of warfare and human conflict) a spatial threshold evoked during the process of cultural protocol, or pōwhiri. Photo by Jacqueline Shea Murphy.

JG: This is a fascinating conversation. I love it, thank you, Jackie, for grounding these thoughts and ideas and also making me understand the importance and significance of it as a response. Time and space are a powerful notion in Te Ao Māori worldview. We know it as wānanga, which contain multiple energies converging together, and what that does is remove reliance on Western time. It allows you to [be]come more strongly embedded in the unfolding of the experience and [feel] that every part dictates the next way in which the current will flow.

Regarding the dancers that I worked with, I understood they were there in solidarity with me as a Māori person exploring how to interact with my tribal house in Chicago physically. First of all, what connected us was tuning into our own cultural identities and shared sense of the conflict that resides in our own stories. Then we were able to understand better that institution's colonisation. There are overwhelming structures that obstruct our ability to access these felt bits of knowledge in the body, so the encounter felt staged. Anchoring into my relationship with the house was important, knowing that I don't live there and that I don't know when I might go back again. I fixated on getting as much of that information physically into my body for the future. I hadn't thought about that as an archive until

Figure 3.4 Jack Gray physically responding to the inner architecture of Ruatepupuke II as a way of spiritually embodying the carvings and woven universe. Photo by Jacqueline Shea Murphy.

just a second ago, but knowing that the house's purpose is for people to work out their pathways, I needed to figure out another way to bring Māori spatial elements of interaction, such as pōwhiri – a staged ritual encounter between people of the land and the house, welcoming guests with no conversation but through tribally specific, continually evolving, ingrained formats – into the space in Chicago. I had to translate the ritual context of a powhiri in this completely different environment, happening inside the museum, where the first part of the call, the karanga, tells you to look up at the sky – but you're inside and you can't see the sky. So I had to find a way to navigate moving through the ritualistic cultural thresholds of the house from a global Indigenous lens, reading it as a performance while also interpreting its coloniality. I'm caught somewhere between notions of therapy in the Western sense, and then notions of rongoa, which is a listening in the intuitive sense – and how I understand all of those things within the realm of what we know or call dance. That space was doing what the space required, which was being in the domain of listening and further knowledge-making. At the point when we extracted ourselves from our experience that day, we were able to continue our creative journeying, moulding that material through conversation, through physicalising, through intervening with lights or sound or AV, and through thinking both interdisciplinarily and

interculturally. And we also had a Q&A, which you moderated and we recorded, and that recording still exists – again as an archive of that particular moment.[10]

"As much as my body could physically gather": Ongoing journeys

So, bringing it back to Aotearoa, I ended up going back to my tribal land and performing some of these dances with dear friends of mine. I was able to have a surprise experience because I'm used to being the only one who knows the story. So it was such an amazing thing to go back to my land and to see all of the Elders, mostly now just the grandmothers, sitting there at the back of the room where my father went to school. They sang with us and remembered people whose voice recordings were in the archival radio interview (which we used as our soundtrack).[11] So lots of things happened that day. I was able to find my own joy and peace with knowing that I had gathered as much as my body could physically gather. I could bring as much as I could through my own storytelling, through my dance on my whenua (land) with my people. I know that my tribe are very renowned for being creative, for being performers; some of the most famous songs come from my area. (Although you can probably have anybody say that to be honest!) What was interesting was that sometimes we stick to resolving feelings that make us uncomfortable. I felt that what was being told to me after the performance was, it's still an unresolved issue. People can say things (or they can't say things) out of respect for others and I feel like these mysteries continue to flow. I think that's okay. It's not about having the definitive story or feel-good ending.

I was always sure that the house should come back, yet the people there presented another reality. When the meatworks (the area's main source of employment) closed down – during 1950s postwar – everyone started moving away towards the cities for further education or a different life. My father joined the army, one of the only things that many Māori could do at the time. When I was there, the area had high unemployment rates and not as much sustenance (because we're not living in the same ways that we used to live. And there is a general sense of poverty in these areas), which means they can't afford to fix a broken window on one of the marae (meeting house) or paint the outside of the building. So one of the last things they said was we're glad the house is somewhere that it can be looked after. That's a bittersweet note to finish on, because I realised there's a reason for everything, and we have to go through the whole journey. I know that my journey is ongoing, and I have many creative inspirations that will come through a deeper investigation of

10 Mixing Lab, "Ruatepupuke – The Talk Back", on *Mix Cloud*, https://bit.ly/3OQ37Yw, accessed 19 November 2021.

11 Ngā Taonga Sound and Vision, *Mobil Radio Awards Entry 1994: Best Community and Access Programme, Best Spoken Programmes, Best Documentary or Feature Programme "Ruatepupuke"*, (Audio, Reference Number: 13924, 1994), https://www.ngataonga.org.nz/collections/catalogue/catalogue-item?record_id=153267, accessed 19 November 2021.

Figure 3.5 Jack and dancers performing at Jackalope Theatre, 30 August 2017. Two days of rehearsals, embodying the experiences felt in and around the city, and sharing movement transferred from I Moving Lab's pick-up projects around the world. Photo by Jacqueline Shea Murphy.

Figure 3.6 Post-rehearsal pre-performance release, exploring Skikako (Chicago) as part of I Moving Lab's I LAND project. Photo by Jacqueline Shea Murphy.

body expression, knowledge and practice. So, it's one of those ongoing things, and I'm really happy anytime that I'm asked to share this story with people, so thank you, Jackie.

JSM: Thank you so much, Jack. It has been wonderful to talk with you. So many memories and things to continue to work with and think more about. I think we've been needing to have this conversation for a while, and I'm so glad we made time to do it.

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