

Hawaiki TŪ

The power of kapa haka, Māori Movement and theatre

BY KYLIE BROWN

In this article, Kylie Brown talks to Kura Te Waati and Beez Ngarino Te Waati. Bearing witness to the philosophy of their practice, Kylie's interview is conducted solely in the Māori language, and so this article is published in both Te Reo and English.

E rongō ai te tangata i te mauri me te ora ina kōrero tahi me tēnei tokorua, a Kura Te Waati (Te Aitanga a Māhaki, Tūhoe, Te Whakatōhea, Te Rārawa, Te Aupōuri) me tana hoa pūmau a Beez Ngarino Te Waati (Ngāti Ranginui, Ngāti Pukenga, Ngai te Rangī, Waikato). Ki tā rāua, me aro tātou ki ngā kōrero a ō tātou mātua tīpuna, kia eke tātou ki ngā tuamata i moemoeātia e rātou.

Koinei te puna whakaaro i tupu mai ai a Hawaiki Tū, he whare toi whakaari e aro atu ana ki ngā mahi kapa haka, e kawē ana i ngā whare kōrero o rātou mā, ngā kōrero me ngā tikanga a te iwi Māori. Ko te whakakotahi i ngā ao me ngā taha e rua hei painga mā tātou, mā te iwi Māori i tēnei ao hurihuri, te pūtake e mahia ai ngā mahi e tēnei tokorua. Arā anō ngā mātauranga o ngā mātua tīpuna e mārāma ai ēnei tūmomo mahi whakaari ā-kapa haka nei, e kīia ana i te reo Pākehā ko 'haka theatre'.

He iwi kapa haka a Beez rāua ko Kura, ā, kua roa rāua e haka ana i Tāmaki Makaurau, mō Te Waka Huia, ā, me te kamupene Pounamu, ki raro i te mana tohu o Ngāpō rāua ko Pimia Wehi. Mai i tēnei whanaungatanga, kua toko te pātai ki roto i a rāua 'Kei hea te ara e kōkiri atu ai ēnei tikanga ki ngā mahi o ia rā, kia whakawhāiti mai tēnei mātauranga ki roto i tēnei ao, hei oranga mō tātou?'

I whā tau a Kura e ako ana i Te Whare Wānanga o Tāmaki Makaurau. I whai ia i te huarahi ako i ngā mahi toi whakaari, ngā mahi kanikani hoki. He tino tauira ia, ā, i pai ki a ia te ako i ngā tūmomo kanikani me ngā mahi



TE MANAWA, 2017 / PHOTO: AUCKLAND THEATRE COMPANY

whakaari e mōhio whānuitia e te ao Pākehā. Engari kāore rawa i warewaretia ngā tikanga o nehe me ngā akoranga a āna mātua a Ngāpō rāua ko Pimia. Haere tonu te wā, ka kaha tupu tōna wawata kia kōtūi i te taha Māori me te taha Pākehā, he whakaputa whakaaritanga te take. Atu i tēnei tino whakaaro, i a Beez e mātakitaki ana i a Kura e whakaako ana i ētahi atu, ka kitea tētahi ara whai, ka tahuri ia ki te waihanga mai i te pūnaha neke tinana, a Māori Movement. He tino mahi tēnei kua puta ki te ipurangi, ki ngā kura reo Māori o Aotearoa, ā, ki ngā tōpito o te ao katoa pēnā i a Kānata, i ngā motu o Te Moana-Nui-a-Kiwa. Kei te haere tahi tonu ko ā rāua mahi e rua, a Hawaiki Tū me Māori Movement. Te nui hoki o ā rāua mahi e kare mā!

Tae noa mai ki ēnei rangi, kua hora whānuitia te rongō a Hawaiki Tū ki roto o Aotearoa, ki te ao hoki, hei whare tāpere e ora ai ngā mahi toi a te ao o nehe, tērā tonu ko te tino kite i ngā mahi kapa haka papai rawa atu. E whā ngā tino whakaari kua puta i tēnei tokorua, ka tīmata i te tau 2014, ā, ia tau kua minamina te iwi ki ngā mahi toi whakaari ā-kapa haka nei. Ko te tino miharo, ko te reo Māori, ko te reo waiata ka rangona, ā, ko pukukata, ko tangi tērā ka noho tahi ki te ngata i te hiakai o wairua tangata. He tino kitenga ko te kaiwhakaari i tōna tino tihi o pai mutunga, koia tērā e tohungia, e arahina e rāua, a Kura rāua ko Beez.



BEEZ NGARINO TE WAATI, MĀORI MOVEMENT

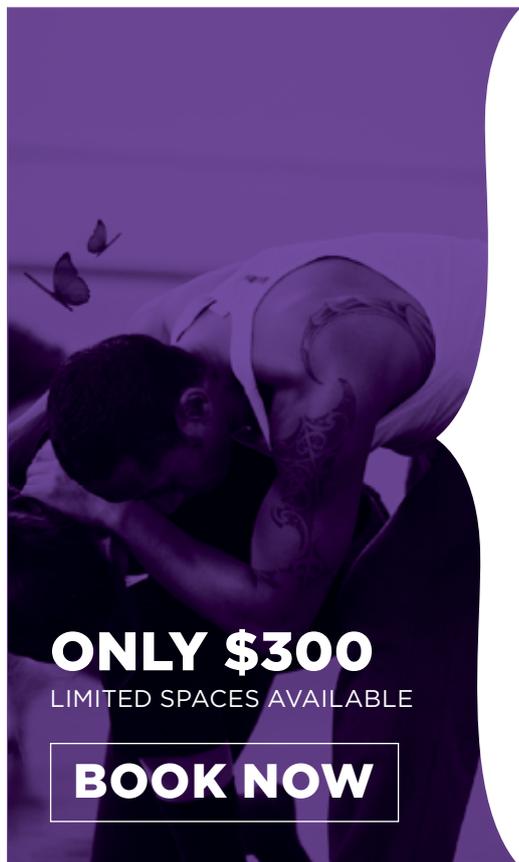
Talking with Beez and Kura Te Waati, it's clear that they're at once focused, inspired and in tune with the world, both past and present. And this is at the heart of their aims in fusing traditional wisdom with the daily need to develop and maintain well-being through art, and also fitness, in an ever changing and fast paced modern lifestyle.

Beginning in 2014, Hawaiki TŪ has produced haka theatre each year with shows featuring regularly in the New Zealand arts calendar. Kura and Beez agree that

the world is alert to indigenous and especially Māori culture. Kura says 'Haka theatre is a new indigenous art form that combines the fundamentals of kapa haka, Māori movement and theatre.' Expanding on that, it's important to know that haka theatre is a format for theatric and dance performance, supporting narrative with the use of traditional Māori philosophy and movement. The couple agree 'It's an opportunity for people to increase well-being through the practice and viewing of artistic and dance pursuit, benefiting directly from the ancient wisdom of te ao Māori (Māori world), at the same time as generating a lot of joy!'

Beez and Kura are accomplished and busy! They have both represented Aotearoa and performed prolifically both locally and nationally for most of their lives. Kura currently teaches haka theatre at Te Wānanga o Aotearoa (TWOA), and Beez recently established a Māori fitness programme, 'Māori Movement'.

'We benefited from traditional knowledge ourselves, and through kapa haka and dance we know the path to spiritual and physical well-being well. But while studying my performing arts and dance degree, I realised a strong desire to combine what I knew of kapa haka and Māori performing art with my knowledge of global dance form,' Kura says.



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BEEZ NGARINO TE WAATI AND KURA TE WAATI



MĀORI MOVEMENT - TĀNE MAHUTA



TE MANAWA, 2017

Māori Movement is a health and well-being programme that brings together the traditional training of the Māori warriors (both male and female) into a modern interpretation based around Atua (Māori Gods) to inspire the approach to each movement sequence. Based on mātauranga o ngā atua, Māori Movement uses the concept of haka. "I think people align themselves to liking the haka," says Beez, whose introductory video went viral when released at the beginning of 2017.

Hawaiki TŪ showcases Haka Theatre, combining kapa haka with contemporary dance and Māori Theatre, and Māori Movement is an integral part of the kaupapa of this practice. Kura teaches the discipline at TWoA as a Level 4 Certificate in Performing Arts and helped tailor Beez's Māori Movement into a Level 3 Kāwai Raupapa Certificate to bridge taurira into her class.

In 2017, Hawaiki TŪ produced *Te Manawa*, staged during Matariki (Māori New Year), a Shakespearian love story about Koru and Te Mauri, lovers from rival iwi who are destined to a life of connection by a negotiated truce. The riveting format of haka theatre lends authenticity to the narrative, captivating and enthralling audiences. The bilingual performance is action-packed; celebrating love, adversity, conflict, humanity and, necessarily, hope.

Beez and Kura have big plans for Hawaiki TŪ in 2018; international performances for *Te Manawa*, development of a new haka theatre production for Matariki and participation in an annual indigenous festival. But the most exciting thing is work on achieving L1 and L2 certification for their Māori Movement programme.

Hawaiki TŪ's combination of kapa haka, Māori Movement and theatre is bold and innovative and a positive step towards building strength for community; providing opportunities for personal development and inspiring future generations to develop and maintain well-being through art and fitness. ■

Mā te mau ki ngā tikanga a ō tātou mātua tīpuna, ka ora ngā uri whakaheke.

Valuing the gift of wisdom (customs of our forebears) prepares us for the future.

Go to www.maorimovement.co.nz for more information about the Māori Movement programme. For more information about Hawaiki TŪ, go to www.hawaikitu.com