

Tihei Mouri Ora

Inumia te wairoa, i te puna o te Atua

He Waioara, he Waioara

Tihei mauri, tu Ki runga!

E nga mana, e nga reo, e nga waka

no uta no tai

Tena koutou,

Tena koutou,

Tena koutou katoa.

BE AT ONE WITH GOD

To the Mackenzie Guardians and many others this ancient exceedingly beautiful, largest internal land area of these islands evokes an astounding sacredness.

To the ancient ones, the Earth of this area they walked upon was to them not unlike the sacredness of the floor of God's true church, or the inside of Rongo's domain of the Whare Tupungna.

It connected their living bodies like a placenta cord to our sacred Earth Mother and all of its life giving forces:

Earth to grow their food, along with all other food sources of the natural world and most importantly

THE LIFE GIVING SOURCE OF WATER.

THEY treated and looked upon these sources with utmost respect.

The Magnificence of the ancient hills, mountains that pierce into the sky of this area to those before were like walls embedded into the sacred earth.

They could reach through/ above these walls like the walls of God's True Church: With its stained glass windows in instances signifying reverence to God's Holiness.

Or the carved Whare Tupunga walls with the Tuku Tuku patterns such as Poutama (stairway to Heaven) up into the higher realms.

Their respect for them was to understand they were a significant statement in God's creation story by giving them names such as Cloud Piercer Aoraki or to believe within their own embodiment of heart and soul that the spirits of their ancestors departed the highest maunga up into the stars of the night sky and into Heaven.

There is an ancient story of the Tuwharetoa people that speaks of the marriage of the mountains to the stars in the Heavens above.

I had to speak of this story in a lecture to an audience at Burke University, in Seattle, United States, 1993.

(This was in support with other artists of a major exhibition of contemporary indigenous work from this land being exhibited at Burke University).

Prior to traveling out of this land to Seattle, one part of my journey along with my partner took us in the early hours of the morning through the volcanic plateau region of the central North Island past the sacred mountains of Ruapehu, Ngauruhoe and Tongariro.

At one part in the Rangipo, Desert Road Region we stopped and whilst out of the vehicle I took time to look from the mountains up into the Heavens.

In one small moment that seemed like an eternity I saw the ancient story of the marriage of the mountains with the stars. Kapaī!

The Mackenzie Country to the ancient people, was an area where through pristine clarity of the air connected to the ancient hills, mountains and walls that

held the sky above one could view up into the sky through the roof of this magnificent land into the Heavens.

They had the vision not unlike the church builders who created the roofs of God's True Church.

Roofs that elevated themselves for those that sit in peace and the holiness of these sacred places to reach higher up through their prayer into the sanctity of the lord. (talk to God)

The Whare Tupunga adorns its ceiling with Heke (ribs in the body of the house) which are a vital support in the structure of the Whare, along with the carved Poutokomanawa and ancestral carvings, that support the Potahuhu. Potahuhu is the central roof beam, which runs the length of the house.

This beam talks of the history of the house that goes back many years into the past, and as the beam moves from the past into the present it acknowledges the clear vision needed for the future.

But most importantly the roof/sky of the ancient, ground, hills and mountains of the Mackenzie Basin portray:

- The Elevated roofs of God's True Church
- The roof of the Whare Tupunga
- The reaching up into the cosmos and into the order of our one creator.

To the ancient ones this area was a pathway to the stars and the Heavens above.

In 1993 before traveling to Seattle to talk about the marriage of the mountains to the stars, I was living on TE WAI PONAMU, in OTAUTAHI.

I have in my stays in the Mackenzie Basin without a word of a lie and with my own eyes seen the same events unfold in front of me, that I saw that night back in 1993. I pay my utmost respects in the understanding of the gifts that God has given us.

If you climb a major part of the Grampian Range you will see Lake Tekapo, Lake Pukaki and the eastern end of Lake Ohau and the splendor of the mountain backdrop that seems to go on forever.

You will also see the incredible living landform called the Mackenzie Basin that some may think through its location is somehow not that way.

If you awake at the foot of the Grampian range and walk down closer to the Basin at 4:30am and await the sun's arrival you will slowly but surely hear a multitudinous cacophony of diverse birdlife and sound echoing through the Basin and see the presence of bird movement across the backbone of the sky.

You may even see the story unfold in front of you, why they called Aoraki the Cloud Piercer.

This ancient internal Basin area and its surrounding hills and mountains, where the waters' journeys begin, that feed the main river, Waitaki is like a womb. A womb where the beginnings of many life sources begin.

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