

TE TAIWHAKARUNGA

The remaining section of Ngati Kahungunu, Te Taiwhakarunga, from Te Poroporo, or Cape Turnagain, to the Wairarapa, is a district rich in tradition and bears many geographical features of importance. The tide of Kahungunu cultural history and mana flowed from the Gisborne and Wairoa districts into Heretaunga and on into the Wairarapa, blending with that of the Rangitane. Te Poho o Kahungunu, a carved house, was erected in the time when the Wairarapa served as a meeting ground for all the tribes and political elders of Maoridom. Haunui, a descendant of Kupe, pursued his loved one Wairaka, and upon scaling the peaks of Tararua looked to the east and saw the sparkling waters of Lake Wairarapa.

Turanga, son of Turi of the Aotea canoe, gave his name to Te Ahu o Turanga. Below spread the dense bush of Tamaki Nui a Rua in the Dannevirke area. Further east stood Te Poroporo, linking all of the hapu of Ngati Kahungunu through Te Kupenga a Te Huki or the net of Te Huki.

*“Ko Ngarangiwhakaupoko ki te matamata i Te Poroporo  
Ko Ngawhakatatareoterangi ki te matamata i Whangara  
Ko Puruaute kei waenganui.” (na Te Huki)*

The people of Te Taiwhakarunga have always been great fishermen of the sea and the rivers, Tukituki, Manawatu and Ruamahanga.

The Taiwhakarunga district is steeped in the traditions of a people descended from a sacred canoe, that canoe being Takitimu.

Ngati Kahungunu history and art express the life and values of the people who have lived and continue to live upon this land. The land is the mother of the people, and in the land is the mauri, the life force of the people of Ngati Kahungunu. The tribe is linked

by many land features including: Wairarapa, Te Poroporo, Kahuranaki, Te Mahia, Te Kuri a Paoa.

Ki te ao marama

The context of Maori art is continually changing like the culture and like the people. Ngati Kahungunu are a different people from the time of Tamatea Ariki Nui. They were a different people again in the time of Pareihe. Today's expression of art comes from a traditional base. The carvings of Matahiwi are easily identifiable as whakairo, as a wharenui, and yet modern, new, innovative and creative. Te Huki, a new meeting house, also incorporates modern expression of a traditional concept — the whao, or chisel, handed down and used in a new way.

Other Kahungunu developments in contemporary styles include, Moko, a story of Mataora and Niwareka, danced by the Royal New Zealand Ballet Company, Wananga i te Rangi, a modern dance drama and contemporary painting and bone carving. The International Arts Exhibition, Te Maori, shown recently in the United States of America, included Ngati Kahungunu art.

New contexts, new values, new issues facing Ngati Kahungunu as a people have given rise to the development of new artistic expression. New life and new interpretations have been given to the past as well.

Te Kauru o te Rangi, an important exhibit in the Te Maori exhibition, highlights the many issues confronting the people of Ngati Kahungunu.

We the people of Ngati Kahungunu, have made a major contribution to Maori art in the past, and we will continue in modern time, to contribute our rourou, or food basket.

Kua kai tatou i nga kai o te mara i tiria e o tatou tupuna, me tiri ano hoki tatou kia whai hua ai etahi oranga mo nga whakatipuranga e heke mai nei.



Ossie Huata



Heitia Hiha