

Kowhaiwhai Arts



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Whakataka te hau ki te uru,
Whakataka te hau ki te tonga!
Kia makinakina i uta,
Kia mataratara i tai;
Kia hī ake ana te ata-kura
He tio ...
He huka ...
He hauhunga!

Cease O wind in the west,
Cease O wind in the south!
Let gentle breezes blow o'er the land,
Let calm seas flow o'er the ocean;
And let the red-tipped dawn come
With a sharpened air ...
A touch of frost ...
And the promise of a glorious day!

Translation by
Pei Te Hurinui Jones

KOWHAIWHAI ARTS

Painting features in Maori Art both in the past and the present.

Traditional painted arts of the Maori (Kowhaiwhai) have been explored and developed over the years.

Following the traditional mixed-media approaches of the past, in which raranga, whakairo and whakawahi worked together to form a whole as in the wharenui, present day artists have made innovative approaches to art forms. Painted works stand alone or painting is used as part of a mixed-media work.

Programmes for students in the senior school should guide them to study these early and recent works and should be aimed at developing knowledge, skills and attitudes that will eventually enable them to use their abilities to develop or, assist with art works that are Maori in character.

CONNECTIONS

On rock overhangs and on the walls of limestone shelters forms representing animals, fish, birds, human figures and mythical creatures were drawn using charcoal or red ochre. Geometrical and curvilinear designs; chevrons, spirals and concentric curved lines were included.

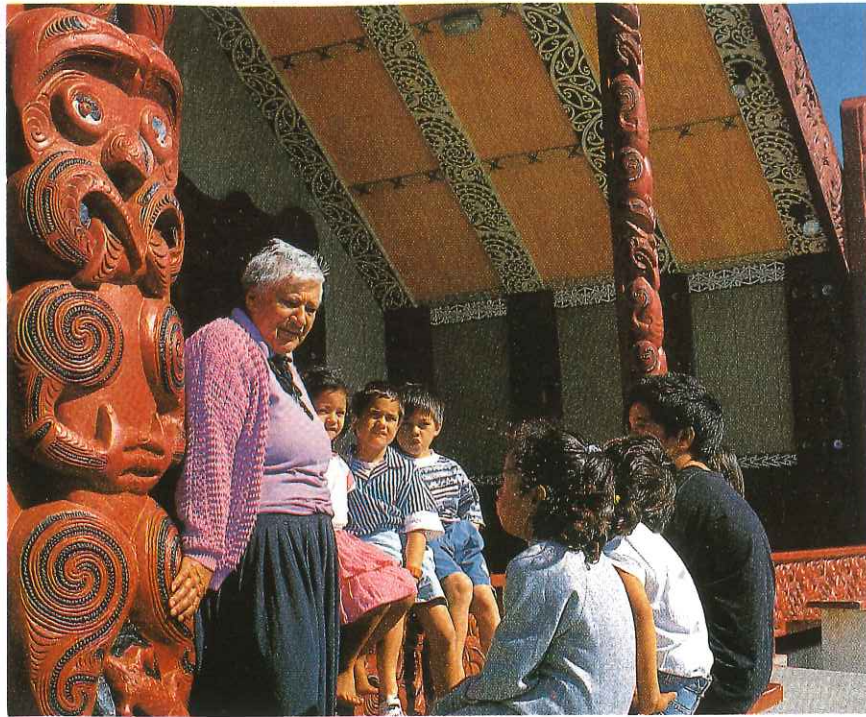
Abstract kowhaiwhai patterns were painted on one side of the blade of certain canoe paddles, on the underside of canoe bows and on the rafters and ridgepoles of meeting houses.



CONTEXT

An understanding of the cultural significance of traditional forms is needed.

The mauri and mana of the marae are embodied in the carved and painted buildings associated with it. There should be a growing awareness of how shapes and forms have been used traditionally and their different values and meanings.



Ideally, any pattern should be considered in relationship to its context by looking at it in the original house or site, in photographs or slides. The relationship of painting to the other traditional forms of tukutuku and whakairo embodies important tribal values.



In Whakawahi, as in other art forms, symbolism is of paramount importance. Works have spiritual and cultural significance usually linked to the ancestral world.

Tribal craftspeople will be able to tell of the meanings associated with the Kowhaiwhai in the particular wharenui visited.

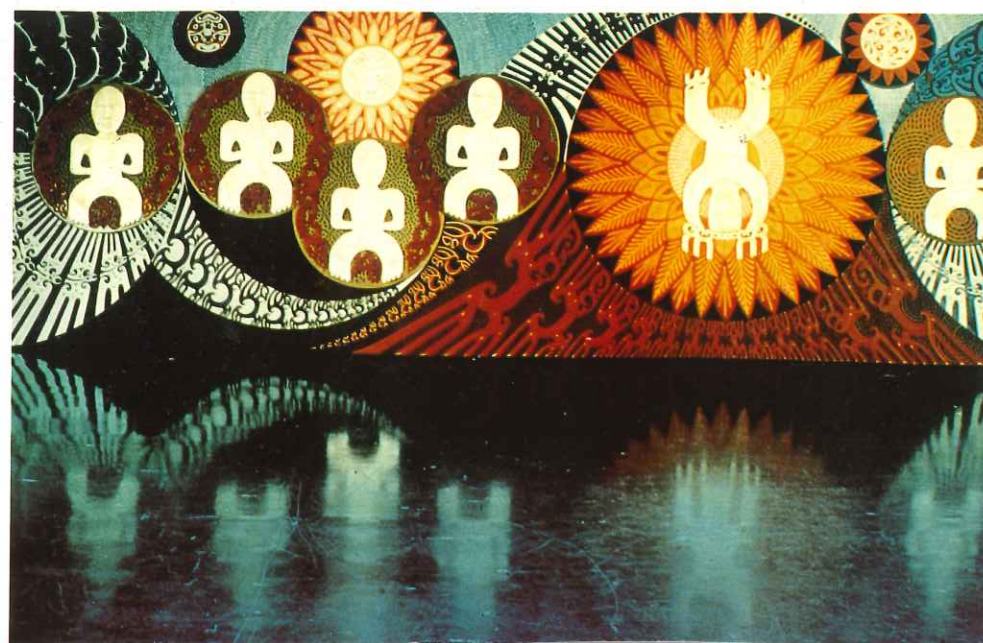
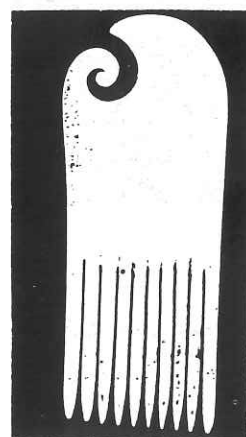
Becoming familiar with traditional forms will develop an understanding of the symbolic meanings of art works. The design qualities of the koru pattern - the quality of the curve, positive or negative shape, the symmetry or asymmetry of design - can be studied.



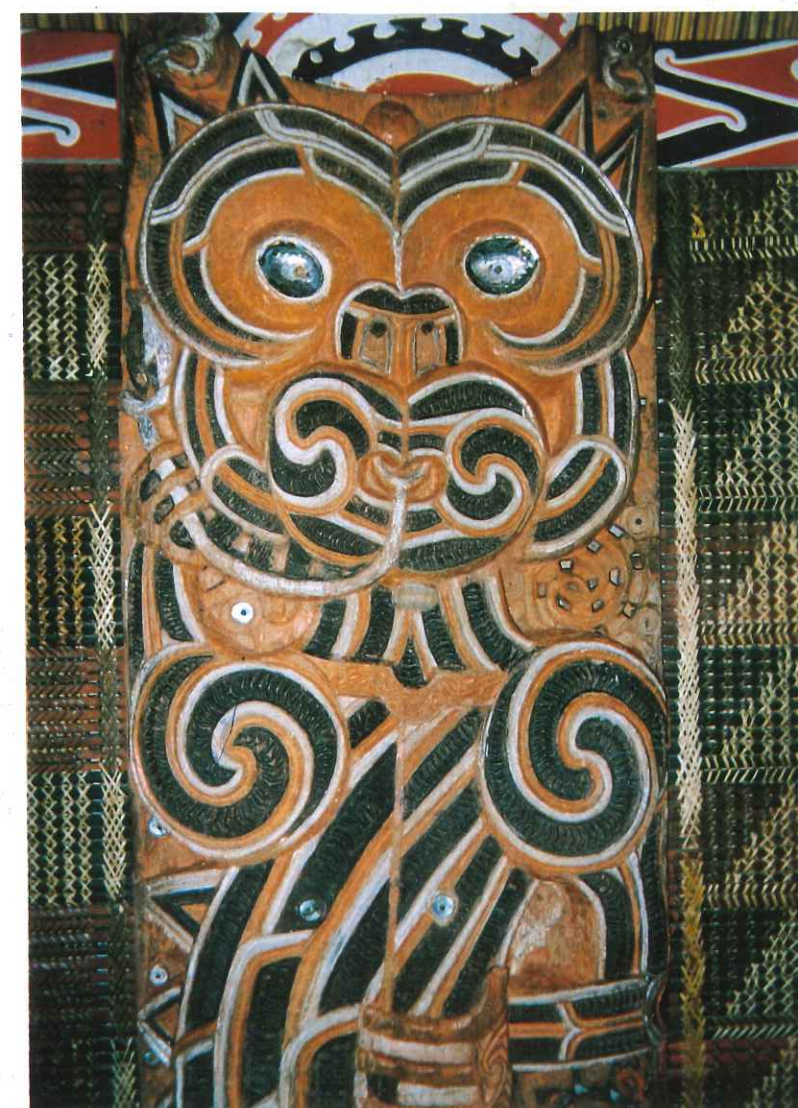


The central sources of motivation for making Maori art works are:

- representing or symbolising the ongoing changes in beliefs; cultural values, mythologies and ancestors memorials to people or events
- expressing personal or community identity through the character of the objects made or the kind of environment created
- responding to style, occasion, ceremony or ritual in such forms as decoration, embellishment and adornment
- personal expression.



In the latter half of the nineteenth century numerous wharenui were built which included low relief carving painted in several colours to delineate form, polychromatic portraits of ancestors and tribal leaders, figurative kowhaiwhai designs, symbols of religious significance and naturalistic representations of everyday life and activity.

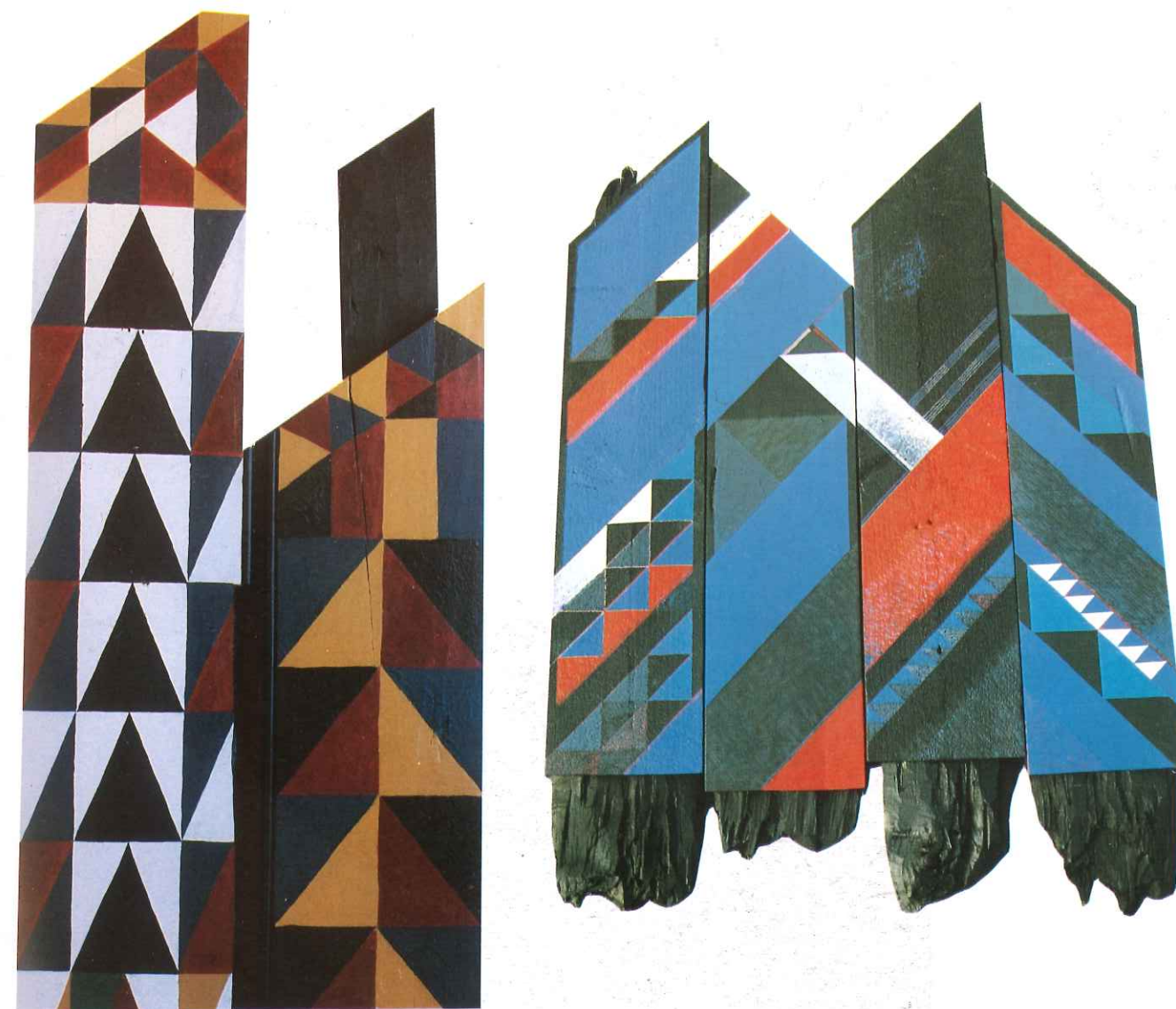
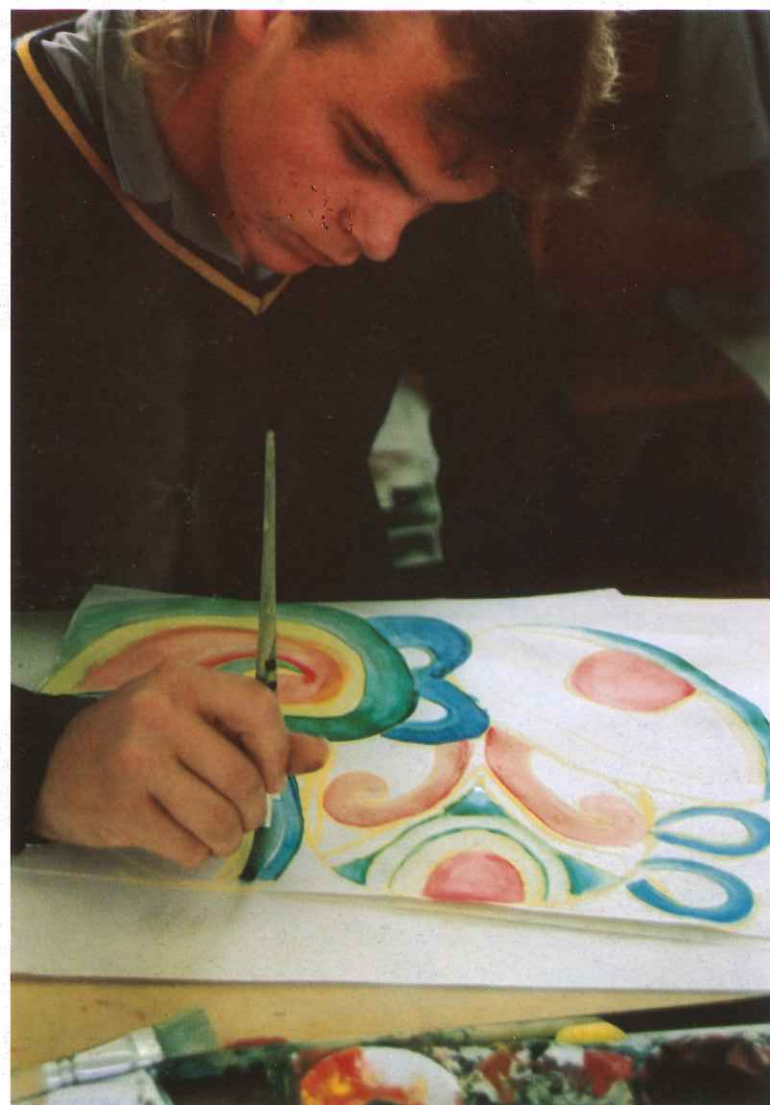


A carved and painted poupou panel of the meeting house; Hotunui (1870's)

KORU should be studied in relationship to its emergence from the **SPIRAL**.

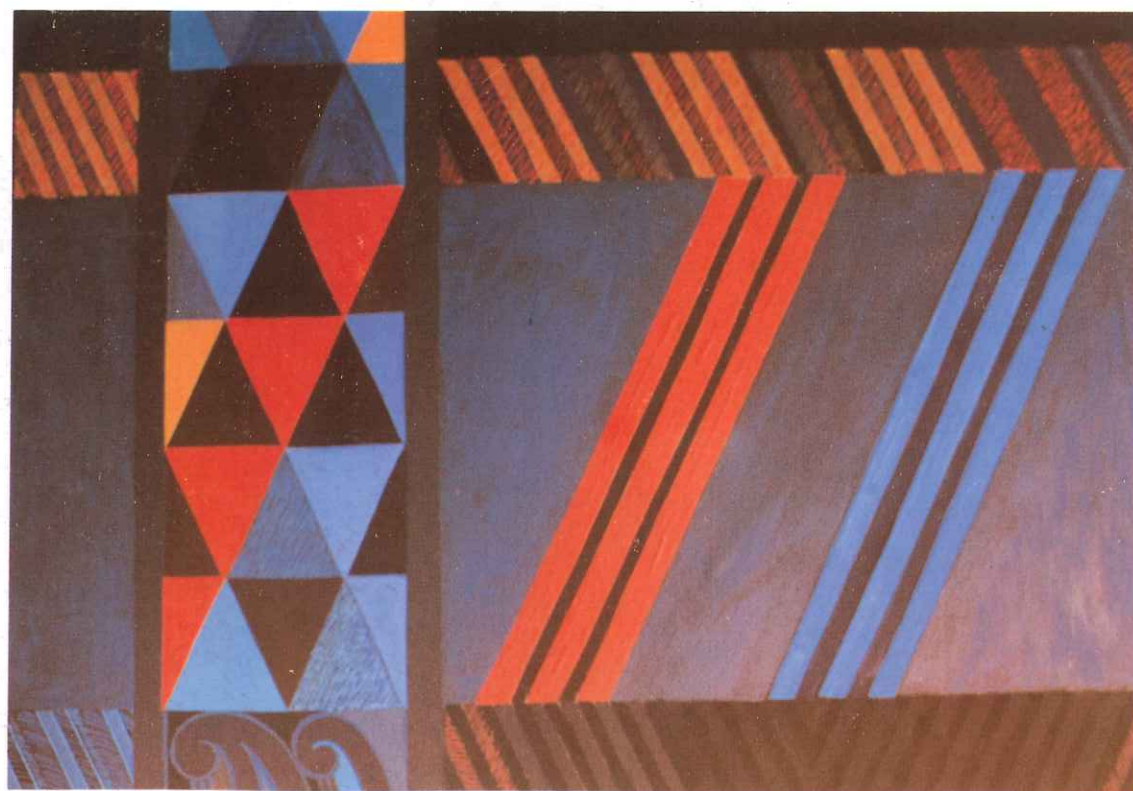
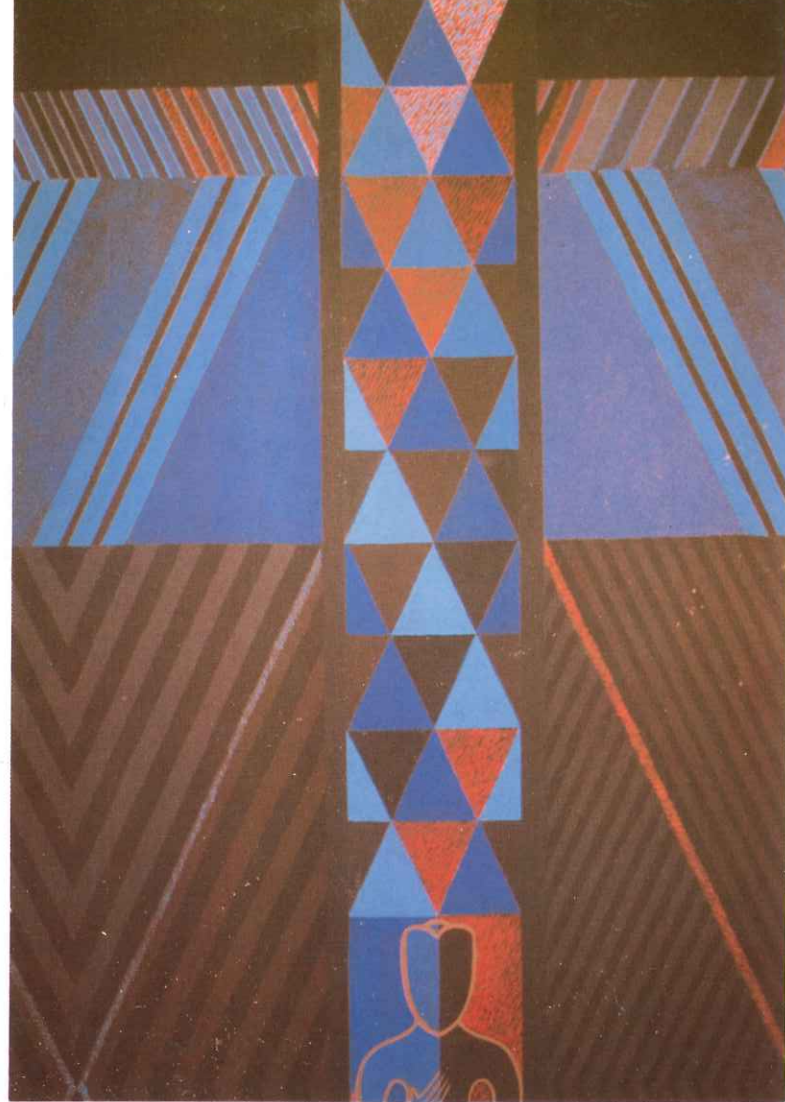


Koru Koiri Mangapare

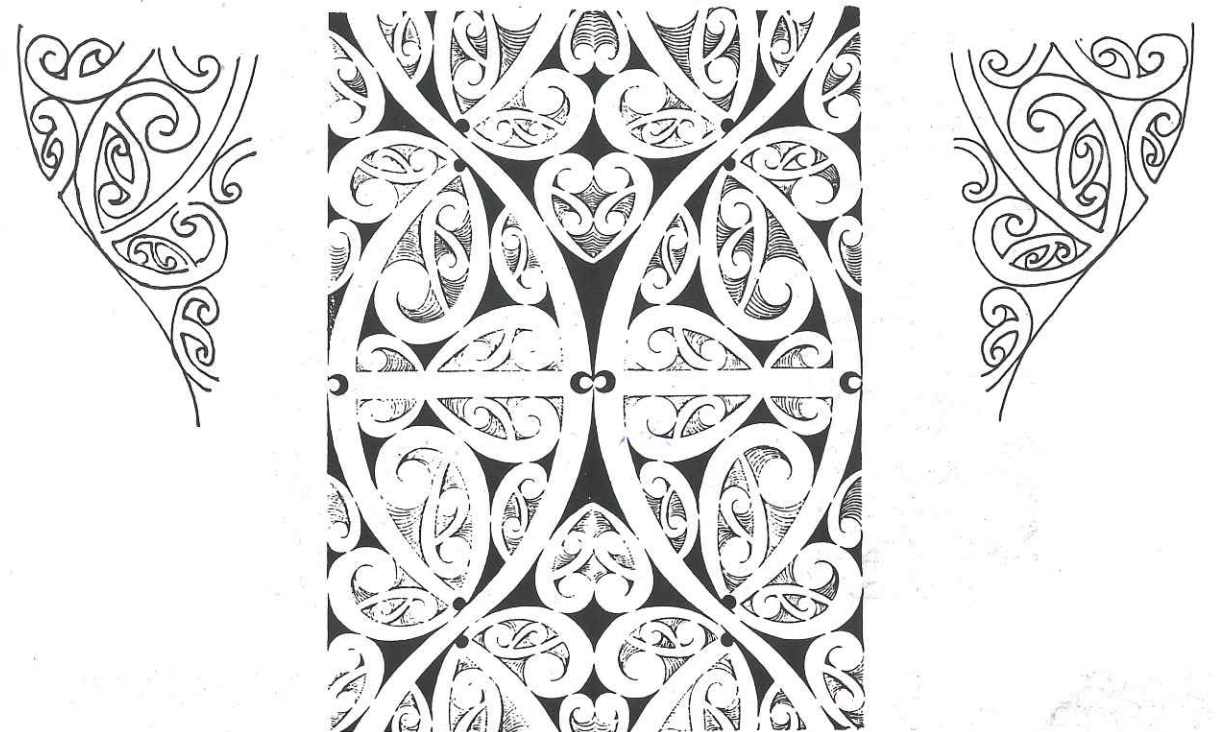
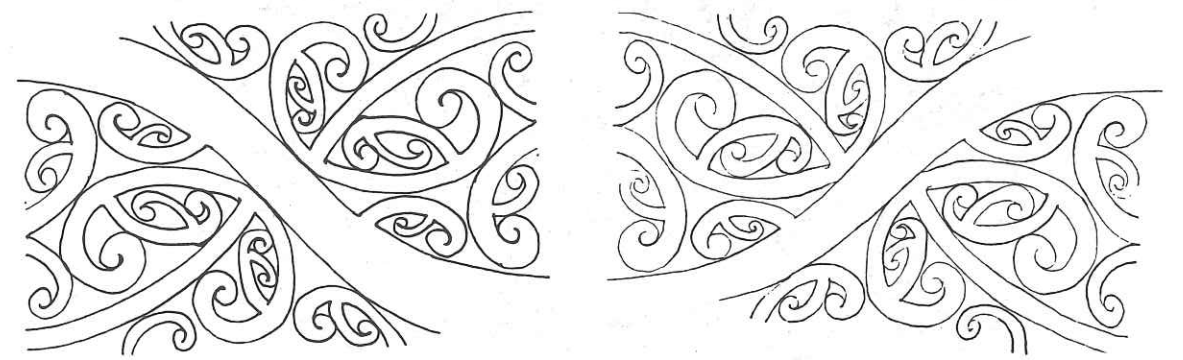


Other designs based upon Taniko and Raranga can be developed. Shapes and colours repeated may vary in size.





Ruia te taitea, kia tu kō taikākā anake.



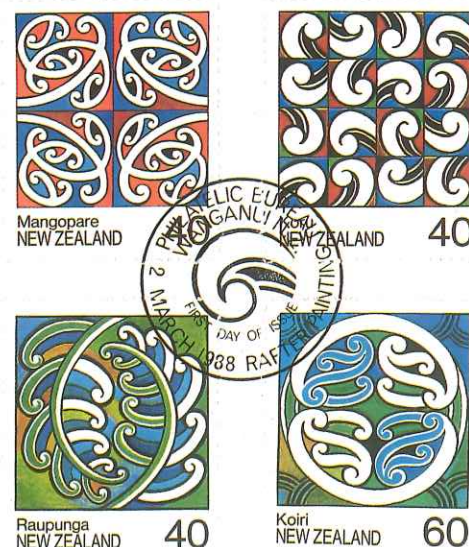
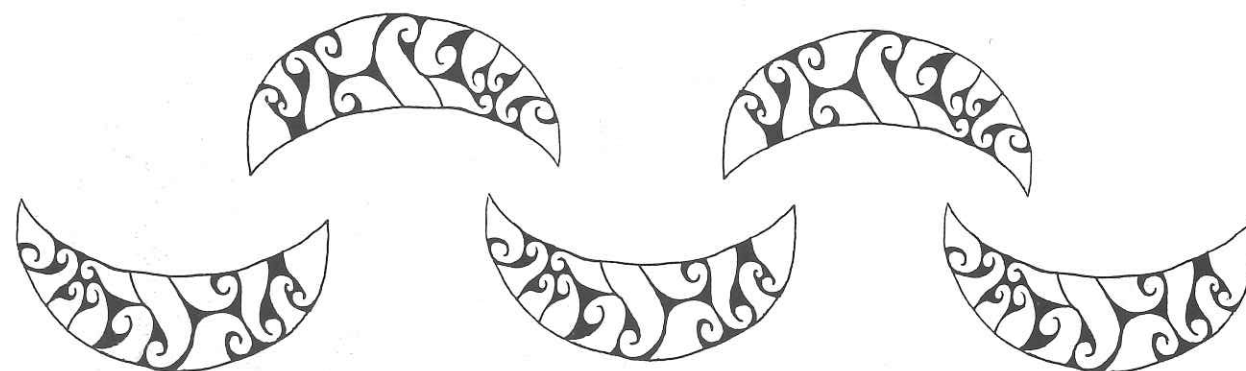
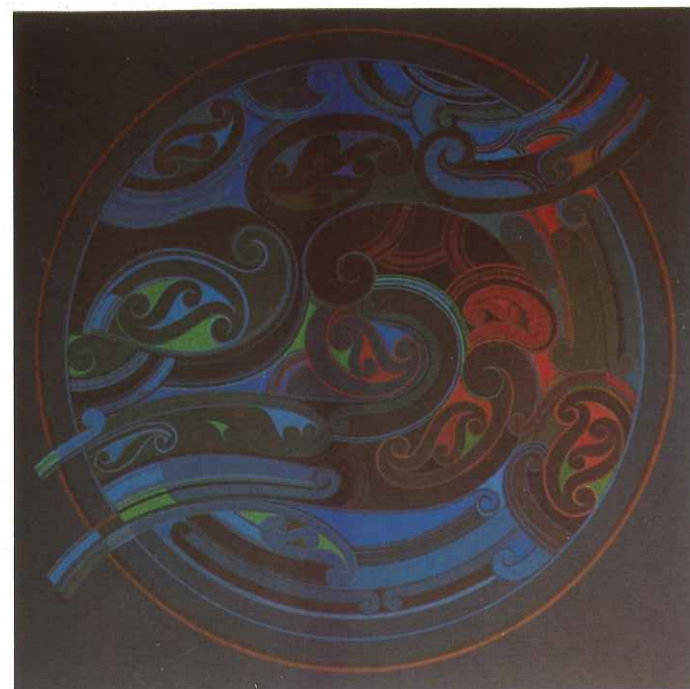
The use of REPETITION in Maori art should be studied. Units of patterns may be repeated: rotation, reversal and continuation.



Try placing KORU WITHIN DIFFERENT SHAPES: triangles, ovals, squares or circles. The criteria for assessing success is the balance of positive and negative spaces: Tapu/Noa.



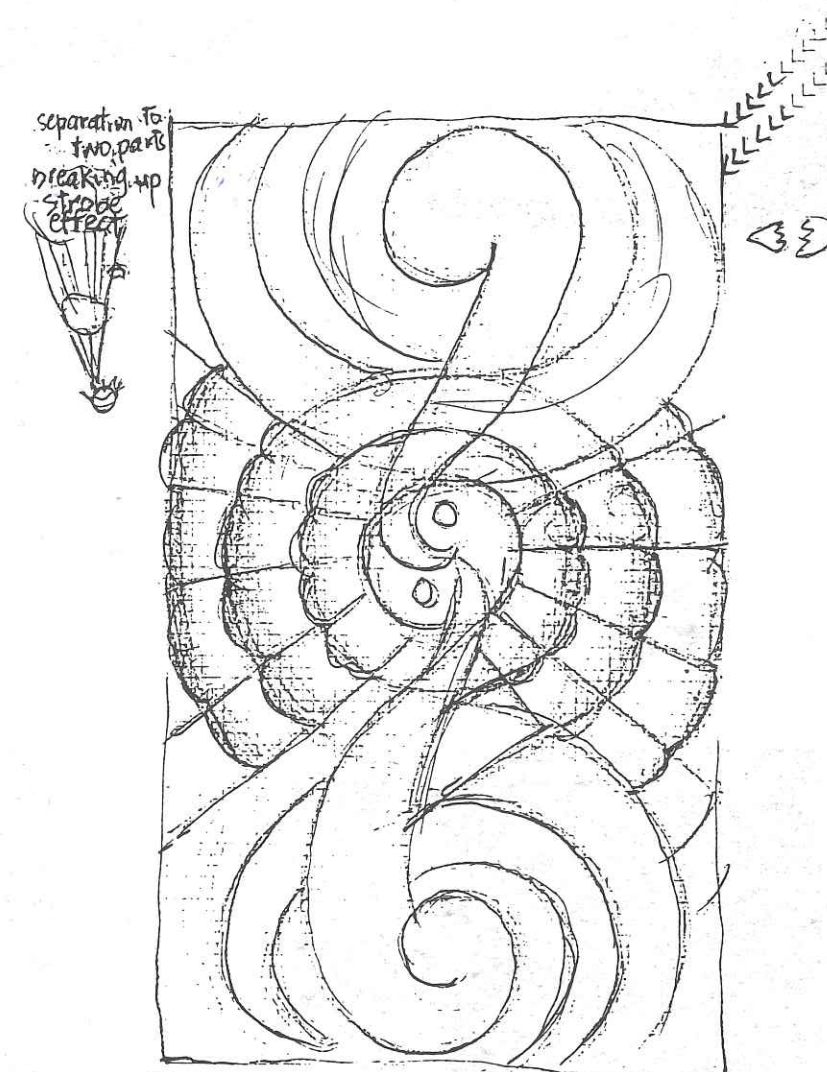
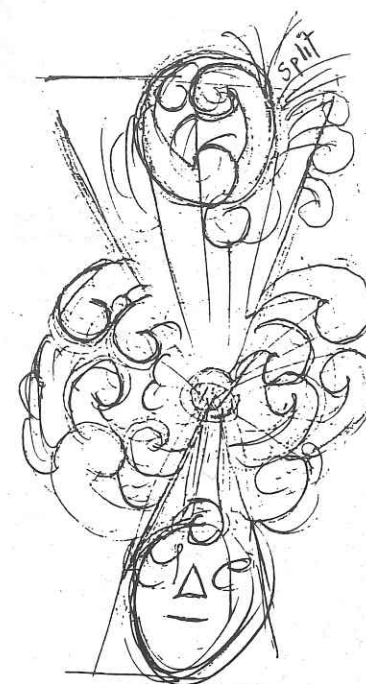
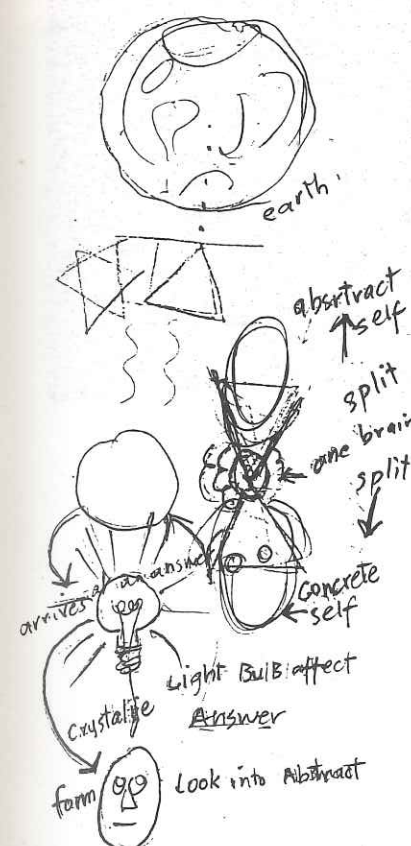
Hei taringa
Jolene Douglas



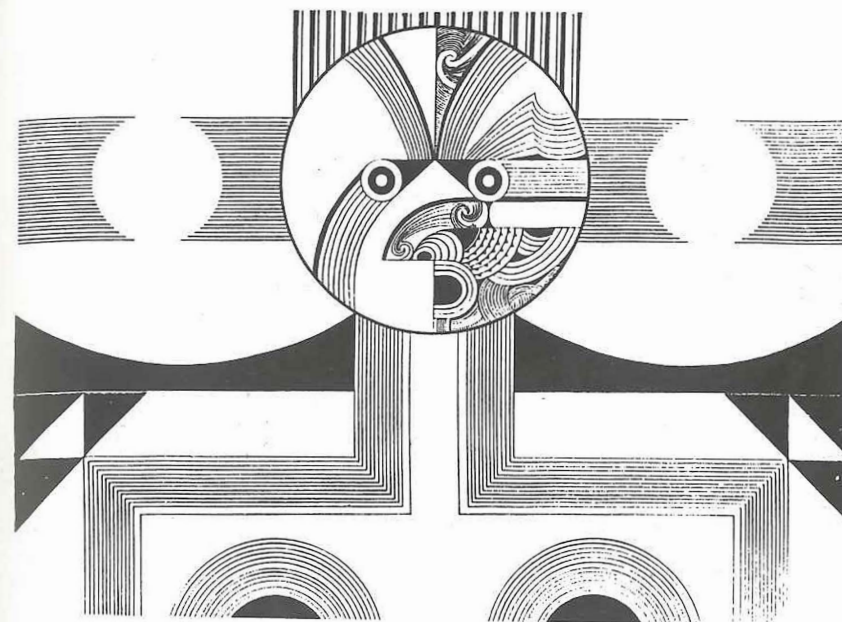
When developing Kowhaiwhai **Tiki O'Brien** follows the procedure:

- meditation
- seed of an idea
- preliminary sketches of ideas
- refinement of composition
- detail
- choice of colour decided by the subject
- painting and finish.

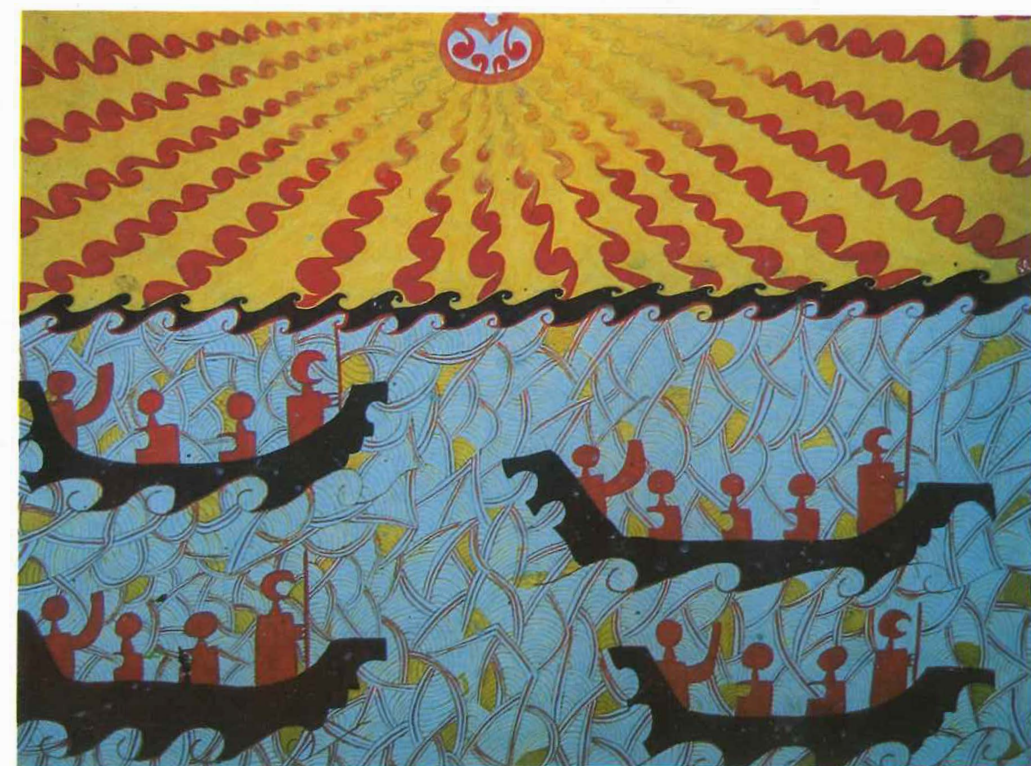
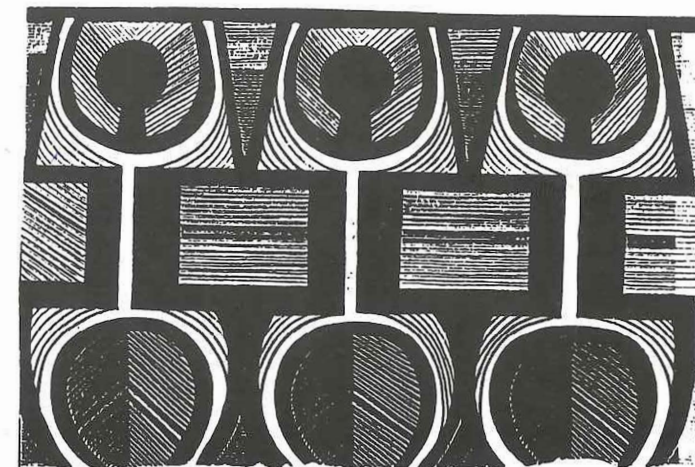
When a repeat is used, a stencil is made.



matekai kapua - to look beyond
eat up the clouds



Study the evolution of STYLED
FIGURES from the past to
contemporary representations.
Studies of figures and heads may be
followed by activities which require
the development of these with due
attention to proportions, symmetry
and simplicity.



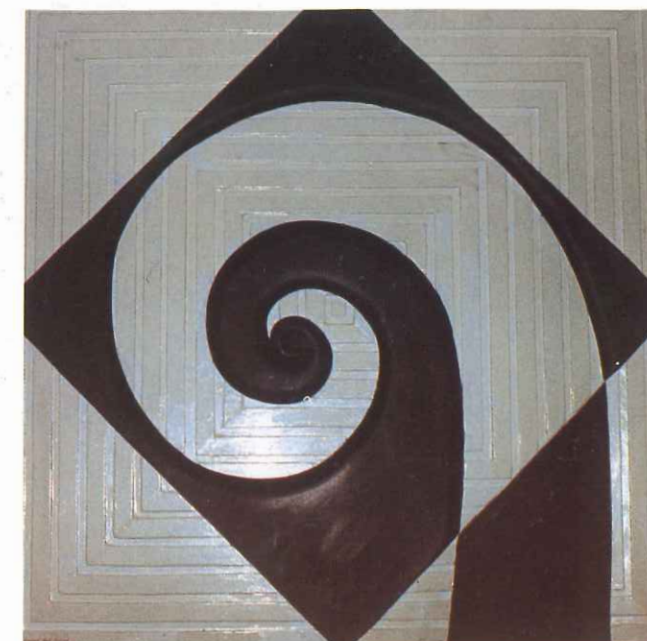
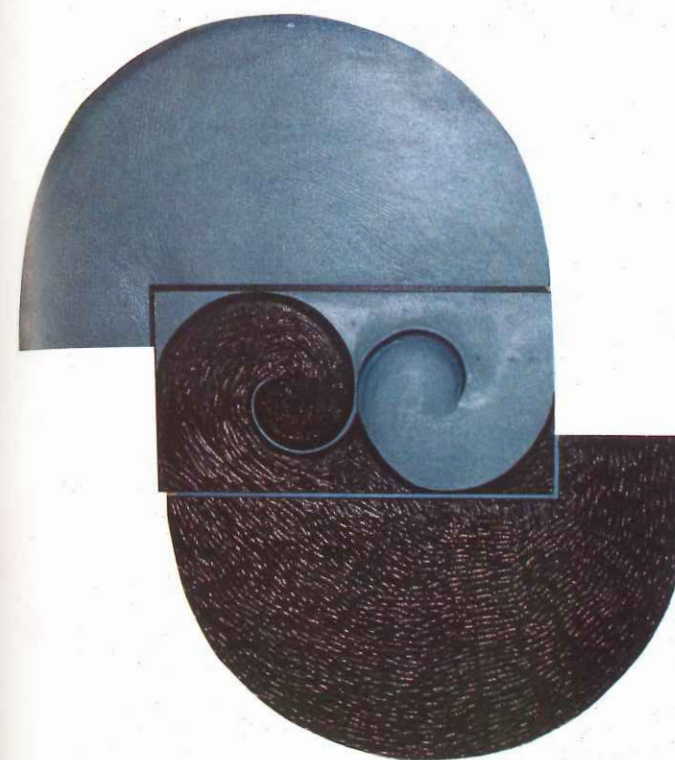
Art works may be created with attention to repetition and balance, using Koru and symbols for natural forms in response to EVENTS, PLACES or PEOPLE, current or past, historical or mythical.



Kowhaiwhai patterns have been created by Ngati Pahauwera which tell of the mountain, the river and the flora and explain the meaning of the place name: Raupunga.

CONTROL

Understanding specific aspects of design should lead to greater control of the elements, media and tools.

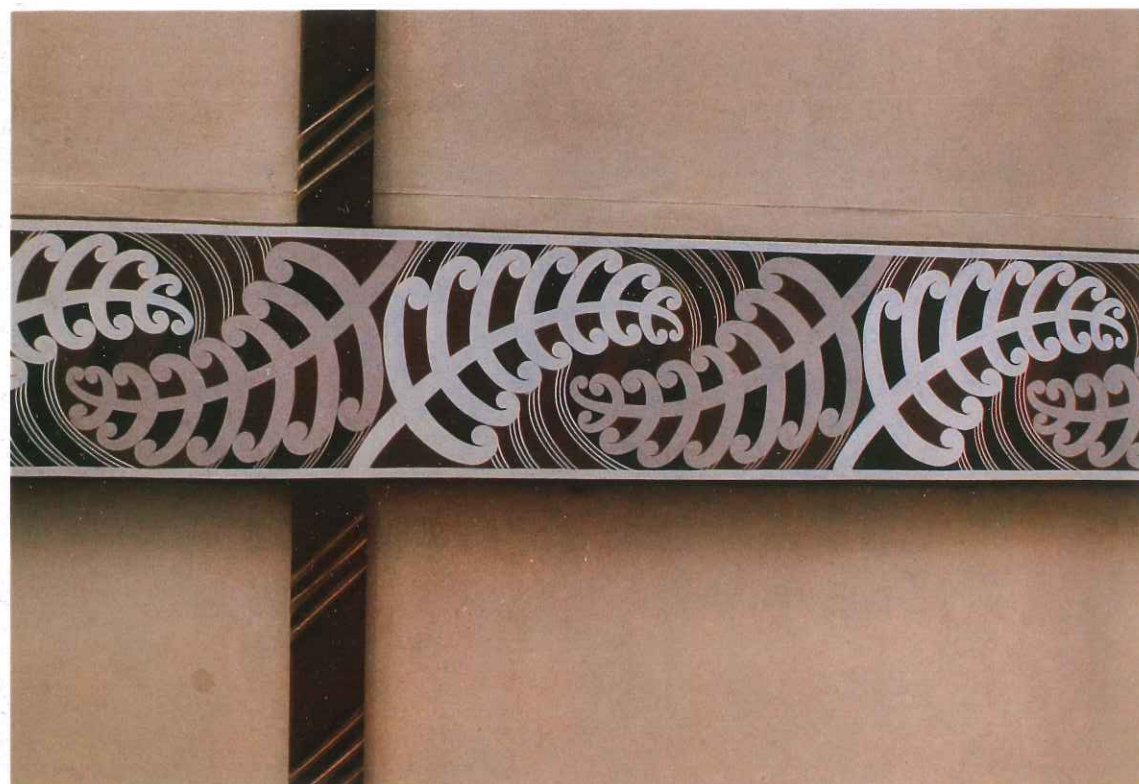


COLOUR and TONE can be used to develop positive and negative shapes, formal and informal BALANCE and concepts of TAPU/NOA.





LINKING POSITIVE SHAPES to edges with PARALLEL LINES (curved or straight e.g. Taki toru) can be used to UNIFY work and embellish NEGATIVE SPACES.



Explore the use of colour. A study of traditional and modern works can be followed by work with LIMITED COLOURS. For example paint some works in tones from only two of the primary colours plus black and white.

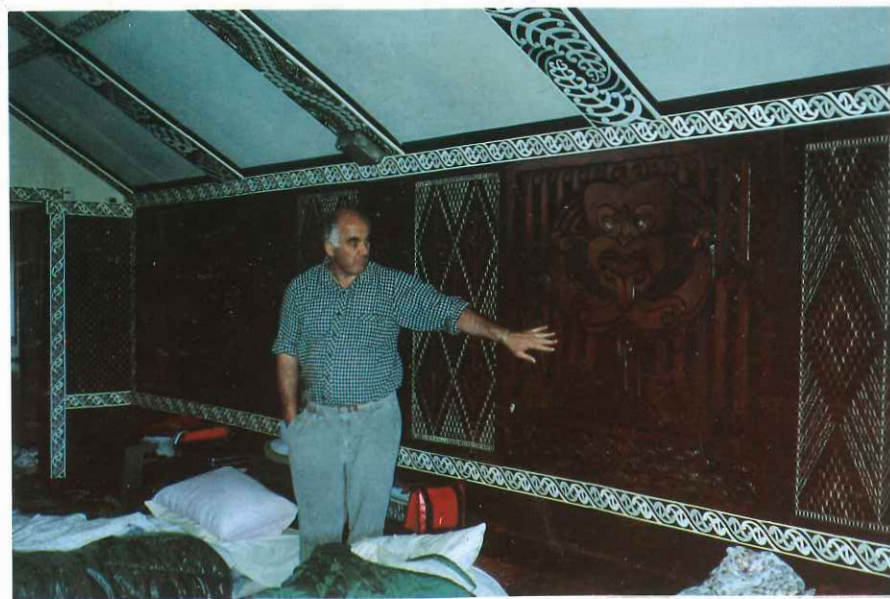


BALANCE can be achieved through both symmetrical and asymmetrical shapes.



CONTINUITY

The Wharenui has definite design components which are inherent within all its art forms.



Each unique piece is connected with identifying and unifying elements; tribal ancestors, a genealogical storyline or proverb perhaps. The relationship between the whakairo, kowhaiwhai and tukutuku fit within a predetermined pattern which expresses the mana of the iwi.

CONTEMPORARY WORKS

Along with woods, paint and fibres used in traditional Wharenui, contemporary Maori artists use metals, plastic and bone in their MIXED MEDIA art works.

