

**Auckland Writers Festival and Auckland War Memorial
Museum Documentary Heritage Collection Commissions 2017**

The following five writers were commissioned to create new work inspired by items in the Auckland War Memorial Museum's Documentary Heritage Collection. They presented their work at a free live event at Auckland Writers Festival 2017. You can visit the Documentary Heritage Collection at the Museum and [also online here](#).

Hera Lindsay Bird
Kelly Ana Morey
Ngahuia Te Awekotuku
Anne Kennedy
Toby Morris

Their final pieces of collected writing are gathered here so you can read and enjoy them. With thanks to the Auckland War Memorial Museum.

HERA LINDSAY BIRD



Morrison, Robin (1980s). [Pigs mating]. Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira. PH-1992-5-RMS12-53-9. © All Rights Reserved.

Once, in a field, two pigs had sex.

That's the theme for my talk, but it's also a fairly accurate way to describe a large portion of history.

But it's not the whole story. Once in a field two pigs had sex and someone famous took a photo of them, and donated that photo to the Auckland museum. That person was Robin Morrison and he died in 1993. Based on the average life expectancy of pigs in captivity, the pigs in the photo are almost certainly dead now too. Hardly anyone from the past is still alive, and more and more new people are dying every day. But as Winston Churchill probably said in one of his many speeches, that's history for you. The past just can't help being over.

The most I know about this photo was that it was taken in the 80's. I know this from the record on the Auckland Museum catalogue. The date isn't more specific, presumably because Robin Morrison never bothered to write it down anywhere. There's no way to tell from this photo whether Argentina had already invaded the Falkland Islands or whether Tony Hawk had joined the Bones Brigade at 14 and become a professional teen skateboarder or whether Chernobyl was in pre-or post nuclear meltdown. I don't even know if I was alive yet. Does it matter? Personally, I like to think so. It gives me great satisfaction to know, for example, I was alive when the Berlin Wall came down, and on

such occasions that I'm compelled to think about it, I always imagine myself as a baby onlooker, gurgling in implied favour of reunification.

I'd like to show you a paddock. In this paddock there's a mountain, a shed, a truck, and a tree with a few yellow leaves still hanging on. It's cold, and early in the morning. In the middle of the field, there are two pigs fucking, and a third pig solemnly grazing alongside them. Is this history? Does it count? Can two pigs fucking ever be history, or are they just temporal packaging materials that help keep the truly historical moments, like assassinations and escalating nuclear tensions intact?

I found this image in the Auckland War Memorial Museum Library, searching through the online catalogue, while an old white man yelled at a young librarian. He was yelling because he claimed someone had donated his relative's personal photographs to the national archive without his permission, and he was demanding them back. The librarian politely explained that the library didn't accept the kind of materials he was describing and his family's archives must have been donated elsewhere. What she politely didn't say, but what was obvious to everyone else in the room, which included me and one old man scouring a giant archival topographical map, was that the national archives aren't actually especially interested in cheating people out of their family photos. Even if the people in the photos were kind people with interesting lives and good intentions, it still doesn't mean they fit the national criteria for historical preservation. That's just the way things are. Sometimes it's better not to have a historically significant life, then at the end of it nobody has to painstakingly index all your Christmas cards. The yelling man didn't like the gentle implication that the Auckland city council didn't think his family history was worth stealing. For him, it was the ultimate insult, like a terrible forest fire that had decimated his entire town, but somehow had forgotten to burn him alive.

The librarian tried to elicit more information from him, and provide helpful suggestions, but the man didn't want helpful suggestions, he wanted someone to yell at. This is, unfortunately, normal. If you work in customer service, people are constantly yelling at you. I think some people leave the house in the morning with the express purpose of finding someone else's day to ruin, which is a kind of furious, extroverted loneliness. I work in retail and whenever someone yells at me for some dumbass reason I just smile vacantly at them and think about how much cancer is probably accumulating in their lower intestine.

Once the man left, everyone in the library relaxed.

I didn't like the yelling man, but in a way, banal family photographs are the kind of historical documents I like best. History where nothing happens but bread, love and taxes. The Auckland War Memorial Museum has a great photographic archive, but it also is a little heavy on the Edmund Hillary front and personally I don't know what to do with Edmund Hillary. He once climbed a very famous mountain. It occurred to me, sitting in the library, typing increasingly dirty phrases into the catalogue search engine that I was perhaps not only not the right person for the job, but I didn't even know what the job really entailed. Could I write a ten minute poem about Edmund Hillary if pressed? It seemed unlikely.

The other day I was reading an essay by George Saunders from the *Braindead Megaphone*, and he quoted the famous Gerald Stern line which goes "If you set out to write a poem about two dogs fucking and you write a poem about two dogs fucking then you've written a poem about two dogs fucking," To me, the quote means that if

you set out with too rigid artistic intention you're limiting the scope of your work by failing to leave room for or alchemy or improvisation or risk taking. It means you're not trusting your audience. It means if you set out knowing exactly what you want to say in a poem, the poem's dead before it hits the page.

To me, a poem written with a too clear moral outcome in mind is the emotional equivalent of screaming at someone in a library, pausing at the end of each stanza to throw a fistful of cherry blossoms at them. If you spend all your time telling people what you think, then you never have time to think yourself, and that's no way to proceed with art or life.

Let me tell you a little bit about Robin Morrison. He was a photographer who took pictures of important historical national events like the Springbok Tour protests, but he also took just as many photos of public toilets and old people in their houses. He was a very nice man, and could talk to anyone. People wanted to be photographed by him. He let them choose what to wear and where to stand, and then he pushed the shutter down and they became history. I liked him for letting people choose what to wear and where to stand. I liked him for his photo of the pigs, which I found randomly at the library when I was thinking about Gerald Stern.

When I saw the picture of the pigs, called officially "Two Pigs Mating" I left the library immediately because I knew I found the photo I was looking for. I didn't know what I was going to say about it, but I liked the cold, autumnal quality of the light and the auxiliary, nonfucking pig off to the side, just going about its day. I liked that Robin Morrison thought that two pigs having sex was funny enough to stop his car to take a photo of, because I also believe that two pigs having sex is funny enough to stop your car to take a photo of, and I liked that the photo is now part of our national historical record. I like the past to be beautiful and have a good sense of humour whenever possible, like all those medieval monks who drew ornate genitals in the margins of their illuminated manuscripts.

I don't know whether Robin Morrison thought of himself as a documentary photographer or an artist, but it doesn't matter. The best thing to do as an artist is just whatever you like, and let the future decide what's important to it

But I also think the photo of two pigs fucking is, if not important specifically, illustrates a general belief of mine which is that mundane and forgettable things are usually the best parts of life. You can't be sobbing beside Churchill's deathbed for fifty years. Sometimes you have to throw your wife over your shoulder and spin her around, panting and laughing like an unfit middle-aged helicopter. Sometimes you have to take your elderly father who you hate to the community pool for swimming lessons. Sometimes you have to walk down the street with a bright red scarf on, feeling supernaturally happy. History's very good at telling us what happened, but not very good at describing how what happened felt.

History that manages to describe to you what it felt to be alive in a certain time, is both an impossible and essential task. Robin Morrison described his own photography as a quality of vanishing times. I think it's hard to believe the past is real. Let alone your own past. Let alone a stranger's past, in another country, thousands of years ago. I think it's one of the great tasks of history scholarship to convince people that the last few centuries actually happened. I don't know if there is anything to be learned from it all, or whether we're all going to blow each other up regardless, but I think that history often looks too much like a story, instead of a lot of random people having sex and

suffering hideously for no good reason. But to convince people the past was real, you first have to make it feel alive. Humour can build bridges of empathy and when the dead can make you laugh they can do almost anything to you. They can come back to warn to you. They can keep you company. They can remind you what's important

I don't think this is a new or original idea, but I still think it's a good one, and I think Robin Morrison thought so too. I have a lot of fears about the future, and I worry that nothing we can do will make any kind of difference to our collective, forthcoming deaths. But until the world burns and everyone we ever loved turns into skeletons and refuses to answer our calls, I hope we can all still enjoy some light-hearted, public animal fornication, or in other words, whatever disguise our deaths arrive in, I hope there's still some laughter to be had.

KELLY ANA MOREY



The piece of writing came out reacquainting myself with George Bourne's photographs of Rua Kenana's community at Maungapōhatu that are held in collection at the Auckland Museum. I initially intended doing a piece of social history writing about the community but a voice immediately hijacked me and I've ended up with something that is an unholy alliance of oral history, poetry, novel prologue and theatre. Because I did need it to have the quality of an old and particularly Maori oral history transcript it's not entirely chronological and is a single understanding so there's some minor points of conjecture.

I also couldn't use dates. Because old Maori ladies living in shacks in the hinterland of the Bay of Plenty in the early 1970s didn't have much need for dates in their storytelling. So to set the scene. Te Kooti died in 1893, by 1906 Rua was functioning as the new Ringatu prophet and had newly established the first community at Maungapōhatu deep in the heart of the Urewera forest. Rua was arrested in April 1916. The community has a second chapter, but due to time constraints I've stopped at the first arrest. The narrator/ interviewee would be in her late 60s when she's telling the story.

Rua. Kenana.

He was our Prophet see. Back then. But Rua Kenana was not our first prophet. We were Ringatu and there was Te Kooti first.

When the prophet Te Kooti died at the end of the last century our people were left blowing in the wind with no leader. From this time of sadness Rua emerged, laying claim that he was Te Kooti's chosen successor.

Rua. Kenana.

His mother was Tuhoe, from Maungapōhatu, and his father was Ngati Kahungunu. One of Te Kooti's men in the years they spent in exile. Rua's father died before our prophet was born and the child Rua was passed between his mother and his father's people.

Rua said he was the new prophet because of what happened to him on our mountain. How he and his first wife Pinepine Te Rika were told by the arc angel Gabriel to journey to Maungapōhatu the place of his mother's people. There Rua was shown the diamond, the guardian stone of our lands. The diamond shone bright to Rua and was shrouded by Te Kooti's shawl and this was how he knew that this was his covenant with God. On the mountain too Rua did also met with our ancesteress Whai-tiri and Christ too who greeted Rua as a brother. Rua said that these were nga tohu that he was the next prophet and like Te Kooti would lead us into salvation and make the land well again. And still not yet would all the Tuhoe people accept him. Rua must, they said, complete one more task.

Rua. Kenana.

He would hikoi to Rongopai, the most beautiful of our painted houses. Once arriving there Rongopai was locked against Rua so he called out to Te Kooti's white horse and Rua jumped on Te Ia's broad white back and rode into the meeting house that had been built for Te Kooti. After that everyone knew that Rua was the true prophet.

Then Rua went to Gisborne to meet the English King. He rode there on his own white horse with the diamond from Maungapōhatu in a chest on his pack horse. This was so that the English King would know that God had said that Maungapōhatu was Tuhoe land and that Rua was our leader. But the English King did not come to Gisborne and our prophet said: 'I am really that king. Here I am with my people.' So his prophesy was seen to be true.

Rua. Kenana.

Rua returned to the mountain as he had promised God and a great many of our people followed him.

I was just a little one when our prophet took us to Maungapōhatu to build the city of God. Born at the start of the new century I was always told. Me, my little sister who

would die that first winter and mummy and daddy. We followed him because there was hardship amongst the people and the land was sick.

We built our houses, rising up out of the cleared land on the side of the mountain and lit our fires so that everyone would know we were there. Ahi kaa.

Our temple, Hiona, oh you should have seen it, it was beautiful, like the Dome of Rock in Jerusalem our prophet said because we were Israelites too, in exile from our lands like the Old Testament said. It was painted white with tohu like playing cards, large blue clubs and yellow diamonds. These tohu were the way by which we remembered the teachings of our prophet like the carvings did in our meeting houses in the time before Ringatu. Rua was Mihaia, our Messiah and this place on our mountain was Hiru-ha-rama Hou, our Jerusalem and Rua said we would be safe here. The City of God would be Maori land with Maori law.

Rua. Kenana.

The prophet took many wives from many hapu, 12 in all, like Isaiah said in the Bible.

They were giving our land to the Pakeha because of the gold beneath the forest in Te Urewera. The Pakeha and our own people too were always after our prophet. They tried many times to make Rua a criminal but he was like an eel, slick with mud and slime, sliding out of their hands again and again.

It was during the war that word came up the mountain that the government militia were coming for Rua, to take him away to the Pakeha Court to answer false charges. I remember.

It was harvest time and we were all working in the fields.

‘Pay no heed,’ Rua said that morning when we gathered to work and heard the news. ‘Joseph Ward is my friend. He made me this promise that no harm will come to us,’ our prophet said leading us out to harvest the cocksfoot grass. The seed of which we needed to sell in order to survive the long winter at Maungapōhatu.

Because we believed him we bent to our labours, the autumn sun beating down on our shoulders. Trying not to notice each time a messenger came in to the fields to tell our prophet that the militia were getting closer.

All will be well. Our prophet said, answering our unspoken questions. And I remember those words, how they rang clear as anything in my head and the rhythmic hiss and pause sound, like breathing, that the scythes made as they cut the grass. All will be well. They both promised. All will be well.

NGAHUIA TE AWEKOTUKU



Olaf Petersen Collection. Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira. PH-1988-9

Honey and the Brides : Olaf Petersen Photographer PH-1988-9 -F136

Hello. My name is Honey, and I work most weekends in hospitality. My clients are brides. Yes, brides, I kid you not. And of course, their grooms come, too; they consider themselves essential to the wedding party, but I often wonder about that. For me, bridesmaids complete the ensemble; fellows intrude, a dissonance in the music of a memorable day.

Sometimes a callow chap in his pressed suit does notice me; but most of the time, the males are vertical streaks or rotund bulges of hard colour, graceless aliens in the shimmering montage of glossy satin, embroidered lace, rich brocade and frothing tulle. Wedding parties would be much better without them.

My name is Honey. I am a Cat. Short thick fur, pale, not quite pink, with darker stripes of ginger orange emphasizing that subtlety of yellow, my undercoat. Coloured like the bee syrup of wild clover. Clover Honey, my name; Wedding Parties, my work. I do enjoy my job.

What follows is a quartet of encounters at my place of work, in the early 1960's, recorded for your pleasure.

Two are introduced by Olaf, a photographer who made beautiful pictures, and the occasional assumption.

* * *

FIRST READING

Olaf assumes on my behalf...

"When the weather is not too good we go inside. On this occasion the bride Mrs M. F. had a magnificent train to her gown. At a moment when the photographer was changing the film I thought I'd try it out for a comfortable posy, it was really just the thing, hope my owners took note and get me a bed of this marvellous material."

Aware of my claws, I shift my weight, stretch forward, preparing to wallow.

Discretely. In motionless silence, meditative, just wallow.

In that ocean of swelling fabric pooled on our elegant new Bremworth – much more than dreams beneath my feet, or paws – but rather, this.

A masterpiece from the House of Maree de Maru, a lushness of heavy silk brocade, patterns rippling in the pellucid light, peonies raised proud, layered in pale ivory on paler white, their delicacy reflected in the deep double fall of batiste veiling, with its softly petalled edge. She is such a tiny woman. Her fitted bodice, sleeved below the elbow, shows a sharp vee between her shoulder blades, nipping into a neat little waist. Poised above this sweeping efflorescence of furrows and plush folds, she looks just like an ornamental doll on her own wedding cake. Extraordinary. She considers her face in the mirror.

Outside, the rain continues, and the afternoon filters in through dappled glass. I pause in my soundless slide across this majestic hem.

Excited, I anticipate my wallow. And then, I notice something. I sniff. Inhale.

Black fur; Persian. Three, four, five long black threads; and a small keratinous hook snared by a crimp of peony petals. I withdraw.

Someone has been there before me.

*

*** * SECOND READING**

Olaf assumes on my behalf...

"Sometimes I think I can help out in arranging the groups for the photographer and persuade the folks to look at their smiliest."

So I should describe the Exceptions – not a rock band, I assure you, but a most unusual group in which the groom and his attendant shone, yes, they shone. Glowed at each other with such warmth; dazzled the camera with direct, open faces, certainly the smiliest ever. Candid.

The bride pushed herself against his left shoulder, tweezering his hand in a fierce grip; perhaps his widely exposed teeth were a wince of doubt, thinking of times ahead. Who knows?

His sister - obviously his sister with a finely plucked version of his black fly-away brows – opened those ruby red lips that matched her satin gloves and dark rose bouquet, and hissed. She hissed at me! Why?

Tail proudly at attention, I was about to examine the scatter of waterlilies floating on the fabric of her train, ever so daintily spread upon the grass.

At that hiss, I changed direction, hearing another sound. A smothered giggle. Sharp ears forward, I approached the secret giggler. I have cat ears, finely tuned. I can hear a giggle anywhere, even a furtively swallowed one. By the other bridesmaid, dusky, petite, a little country cousin whose lustrous curls were sprayed into a helmet around her lovely head. I paused for effect.

Despite that crooked twist of white carnations and crimson roses winding down from a frilly horseshoe, we made a charming picture together.

Behind them gleamed a textured gloss of citrus shrubbery. The scent of fresh orange blossoms blended with Chantilly on that afternoon in spring. Cobalt skies, lilting fragrance, emerald lawn, the three females were all watching me.

And the men, they were watching each other.

* * *

THIRD READING

That day, I misbehaved. Rather badly, in fact. Showed rather poor form; but the bride, she laughed! She enjoyed my transgression.

I blame the bouquet.

It had been twisted into tasteful shape by hands redolent with my drug of choice.

Catnip. The wire stems which warped into the fabric blooms, fixing them in place; they were saturated. Nepeta Cataria. Every satin-rimmed orange blossom, every velvet rose, every lacey lacquered bud; drenched in the giddiness of catnip.

I just couldn't help myself!

Although a corpulent gentleman cat of a certain age, I leapt! Leapt! Sprung! Yes, I did; flung myself forward, jaw stretching, flehman snatching a whiff of that bouquet.

And more, more. Unprecedented. Unseemly. Unbelievable.

The creator of those faux blooms has a lot to answer for.

But the lady of the day loved cats. Truly. Because she laughed, bent over, reached out for me, preventing my forced eviction by Olaf, who was not impressed. Her fingertips sank deep into my fur, massaging my head, while my ears tweaked with gratitude. Her nails, clipped close and plain like her square signet ring, fondled the pile on my neck. I purred. The after-bliss of catnip, the forgiveness of her touch; she offered me perfection.

I pushed my tail behind a ribboned horseshoe into the heavy satin folds of her skirts, which fell gleaming in their simplicity, like the line of sleeves long to her wrists, and the restraint of her scooping neckline.

Nothing restrained about the veil; it reached the floor as she stooped to touch me, stiff layers of tulle flounced from her inverted Grecian headband, enfolding us both in gossamer, kissed by that heavenly scent.

A Wedding Party to remember.

She really loved cats. Did she have one of her own? Did she take him to her new home? Did she plant Nepata Cataria?

I hope so.

* * *

FOURTH READING

Olaf assumes on my behalf...

"I have an eye for shapely legs and love the feel of those nylon stockings."

Uncoiling my tail to a gentle probe, I flicked it beneath the heavy satin hem. She remained composed, as I leaned against the curve of her flawless calves. Nylon stockings, slick over glabrous skin. And a whiff, just a whiff, of Shalimar by Guerlain, behind her knees.

Dark, powdery, rich, yet light as drifting smoke. Civet, vanilla, sandalwood. Such a contrast to the sunshine of this dazzling summer day.

Secret glamour. Behind her knees.

I tipped the stiffened organdy of petticoats, my tail exploring where those stockings were fixed with snaps; I rimmed the suspender's lacey edge with a quiver of finest ginger tail.

I pressed my striped and sturdy belly gratefully against her calves, inhaling through my moistened leather nose, loosening my tongue for one discrete taste. Of more Shalimar.

And then I withdrew to encounter the next pair of posing white stilletos, and shapely ankles.

My name is Honey. I am a Cat. Clover Honey my name. Wedding Parties my work. I do enjoy my job.

ANNE KENNEDY



Whānki, 1998
Harakeke, commercial dye
3400 x 1800 x 35 mm
Collection of the artists

WARP AND AHO:

A PART-LIFE IN FLAX

*Nau mai e hine
Raranga whakapaepae ana
raa. Taku kete taku too*

*Welcome daughter
to the sacred basket of
knowledge here delicately
woven before you*

Derek Lardelli (*The Art of Maori Weaving*)

1. Harakeke / lily really

In the beginning an app for flax in the soil is family the proverb
a cute shoot raised by wolves hey it's the Pacific the loving state
o nanny my nanny wonder no wonder fibrous as hell later baby
in the middle oldies on the outside getting ragged dew runs down
the blue arms midsummer the yellow parties down in the garden
a wild section when winter comes winter alone and moonlight
writes the harakeke no one sees or hears the cells burst their height
but in the morning no doubt the dead of night is is a factory.

When a girl not her but always some body is colonized
and coloniser two in one seriously too much girl too much part
lateral thinker part straight line pretty much covers everything
like a mat I want to say nothing about a book the library one day

about the long roa as in Aotearoa and strong steampunk strands
reaching back industrialized like crazy and forwards sometimes
dyed almost blue the river too the eternal thread is te aho
whenu the length aho the strength before going any further

I fucking love textiles run between the fingers a childhood
of linen abuse the gusts of Irish ghosts lace like jellyfish
on psychedelic drugs everyone cool with silence and beauty
on her other side similar ravage warp and weft whenu and aho
what I hope what I think GLAM* hopes remember things
keep the plastic write about the plastic on the plastic
the unbelievable touch must never be broken but will be broken
the museum library sheds its particles into the material world

A chorus:

Ah begorrah, we like the flora
We will send our genteel
gunners to preserve our table
runners

Btw harakeke is not a flax is a variety of lily Phormiun tenax
linen is a flax is a flax related through their rhyming side surprise

DNA of the tongue like most Pākehā I love *the bone people* *Bulibasha*
hate Public Works Act 1928 death rate of the Maori Battalion
vote left white left but but Te Aho the confluence pulls me
eternal tug who went to the museum library in a whakapapa way
the family way spiralling after her even though I came before
I have tumbled into the river the garden Kororāreka the district court
in the library a view of concrete a new view of her imagined enormity
the flax is my text I will be quoting substantially from the harakeke.

*galleries libraries archives museums

2. Kaupapa / fantastic

Fevered babies with turncoat blankies the ferny place you lay
your head gone from the light land black with signatures history
is the stuff you like passed too early in the young graveyards rain
[‘I can hear you making’ (Hone Tuwhare)] shaved fields the silt
foreshore your people buried the slow sun in the moony library
an uru pa I read in Te Rangihīroa re harakeke they cut down
the grandparents muka / scrape whitau / beat soak dry roll cord
soak pound rub rinse and repeat Purgatorio for strands at this point
there is no distinction between whenu and aho what they will become.

Meanwhile linen similar the word mordant is to dye a horrible
colour joking! a time to dye Purgatorio for Pākeha in the library
in my white gloves blue balloons really I break out the ephemera
the light fluttering gooseberry seed documents Pākeha harvest
their particular loss how-to books order books for rotted garments
the conundrum holds everything in check 'Miss Mulvanny has a very good
eye for colour' the death of colour eternal life of colour its death

The Colonizer's Chorus (~~in the style of a WWI song~~)

Ah begorrah
we like the
flora we like
the flora ah
begorrrah
we'll send
some genteel
gunners to
preserve our
table runners

Nau mai Paula Morris! no Māori ephemera re weaving just books
and weaving sometimes I bust out the revolving doors of the library
example 1 Paula clunk name-drop in the garden between showers
tends the grandparents laid out on the concrete the good long roa
harakeke fronds washes the bodies tenderly next time I see them
they've suffered died and risen are puti dyed purple are in a vase
on a windowsill On Display backdrop Auckland city like a mascot

photographed at the top of the Eiffel Tower and put on facebook
'General remarks on mordanting. It is absolutely necessary before
[the flowers of friendship faded friendship faded (Gertrude Stein)]
any kind of yarn yarn is mordanted it should be thoroughly washed
otherwise the results will be disappointing. Your yarn will not be
brilliant [GLAM is so steampunk historical-industrial-fantastical]
or if they are it will only be for a time and then they will fade
and then they will fade' (Grasett). GLAM is so honest preserving
ideas about things GLAM preserves ideas about death GLAM is so
hopeful a puti is a puti is a but what if the outer leaves leave
when the shoots are shoots is there a a whakatauki for that?

3. Ringaringa / tenterhook

Got threads now is nau mai the forest nau mai the mesh
of earth and sky now is the hour for things for things to get
material to get complicated taaniko is the weaving method
commonly used for borders. 'Once [in a blue moon] the beginner
has become more familiar with taaniko one should create new
new patterns rather than copy the old ones' (Mead). Whatu
is a system of of finger weaving a cord stretched between two
two pegs warp threads hung down finer weft threads between.

Europeans seriously pretty much the same except they call

pegs tenterhooks ['she never throws away any piece of paper
upon which she has written' (Gertrude Stein).] 'this is to certify that

Sybil Mulvanny has completed a training course in spinning dyeing
['the long light breaks across the lake' (Tennyson)] weaving plain

weaving patterned weaving carpet tapestry' @London School of Weaving
takes a job at Taniko Weavers 3 Darby St Auckland table cloths

curtains tea runners doilies lustre bridge cloths Ruapekapeka

~~(In the style of an Anglican hymn i.e., German, national anthem)~~

Example 2 from life Reina Whaitiri clunk! embroiders linen

and fine cotton the borders tahi rua toru puti whā manu
a table cloth by her own hands planted in fine cross stitch

at a certain time of year I hang it as a curtain in the place
the place where the setting sun plummets through the window

blinding us temporarily between seven and eight at a certain
time of year the time of year Christmas when the years gather

like pin-tucks and always Reina's flowers exes in flax.

In the language mosh pit where she jives only club in town

every body sports their corporation wear as the night

nears its heart fragments are what the hell through the darkness

para is a tussock rain cape always was the big gold Rangipo
raincoat glittering on the Desert Road behind cloud the noon sun

pours its quiet accustomed breath *para* not the stretchy sound
of Para Rubber Company not the long ring of cash waah of traders
on the floor not the sound sound of the long roa white noise.

The strange zone strange light cast by trellis earth and sky

fine threads create create the backdrop for a hui a garden party
creepers clamber in the rogue atmosphere [‘the wild cataract leaps

in glory’ (Tennyson)] where blood and mud roses and berries in
the fine weave make a taaniko taaniko pattern remember girl

whenu the length aho the strength warp the length [‘I returned
to a long strand’ (Heaney)] weft the strength there is no botanical

relationship between flax and harakeke only the way you say it.

4. Taaniko / kiss kiss

It is morning a white cloth on the table handed down o sunlight o

in the red glass Victorian door the girl saw in a dream a burning
woman the house a kauri forest’s Frankenstein in Pākeha title

is insured but not for theft death nor fugitive colours filling in
the long roa visa form heartache tonight for the memory citizen

of the Pacific Ocean who crosses the border taaniko of eternal
love really she has her law kete philosophy kete an education
in loss these are the tales of a part life in lilies and vases.
.
Her name streamed from the lips of the father on first sight baby
of course she complains a name is a puppy playfight on the grass
bites you sometimes people ask in admin why two words te
aho why the white space this white face on and off they call her tea
is she tea or is she thread which gives mixed-metaphor toughness
but toughness comes from scraping beating pounding Ruapekapeka
we know that from the grandparents the parents the circles of hell
to the chorus should I stay or should I go there is no answer

~~(In the style of an Irish ballad)~~

At the frayed end of the Treaty negotiations frayed beginning of
the century sadly things got off to a bad start when they really
shouldn't have we know what we know what we know knowledge
on the bright side GLAM like a tabernacle is lit from within
respect the street kind for the digital its presence its ethics
respect for its own private climate control its texts all shiny
published on a table all polished all things in things in one the girl
will lose everything but hopefully only at the end

Te Aho the girl kiss kiss compared to a thread the thread will pass
as all things must pass and Te Aho will again be herself Te Aho
the relationship between harakeke and flax is not botanical is one
of fineness Te Aho take your basket of knowledge your kete
complete guide kiss kiss kiss go out into the deafening white rain
sheltered ['If it weren't for your gumboots' (John Clarke RIP)
sheltered by the sound ['If I were deaf / the pores of my skin /
would open to you / and shut (Hone Tuwhare)] the sound of your tipuna.
Go down and be in the garden night and day summer winter
this is the hour po atarau now is the hour to get to get imaginary.

NOTE ON THE TEXT

Until I began to take part in the collaboration between the Library at Taamaki Paenga Hira and the Auckland Writers Festival in March 2017, I had only ever passed through the library. I had never browsed or researched in it, nor sat at one of the desks, nor searched the online database. Being part of the project has been world-widening for me. I want to thank Claire Mabey of the AWF for so cleverly and enthusiastically organizing the event, and for inviting me to take part, and Dina Yezdich, Nina Finigan, and the team at the library, who are so wonderful in collecting, keeping and disseminating the materials in the collections.

For me, coming to what I can only describe as a sacred space, a pātaka taonga, has been a remarkable and profound experience. First of all, the library space is comfortable and lovely. From the tall windows, there is an interesting view of part of the interior walls of the museum building. I found the faces of elegant concrete calming to work around.

When I began to browse through the library's collections, two quite obvious but important circumstances struck me between the eyes. The first is that the museum library represents and reflects histories of this place, and of our post-colonial situation (for want of a better term). That focus became a crucial factor in the writing I was to do.

The second thing is a very obvious paradox—that we live in a material world, yet to live successfully, we need to think about the world in a non-material way. This paradox ran alongside my writing about 'material things', and I'm grateful to have been confronted with it in such a rich way at the Museum Library.

When Dina invited me to begin by browsing in the library's Collections Online—before I even came to the library—an image of harakeke leapt out at me fairly quickly. That one image suggested multiple possibilities, theoretical and creative, and also personal.

I grew up in a house where linen pieces that had been handed down were the most valued objects. And having spent the last quarter century connected through Māori family, Māori woven objects are some of my most valued treasures.

At the beginning of 2017, I returned, after a year away, to our unruly Auckland garden. In this garden there are several harakeke plants, two on the shady side which had politely kept to themselves, and one on the sunny side which had gone bananas. When the ‘grandparents’ (because that’s how the outer leaves are viewed) were cut away, and a smaller, inner plant revealed, the process seemed outrageous and indicative of change and loss.

My real world (the imaginary one, of course), it seemed, had collided with the representative world I was encountering in the library. I hung my research on the fact of, and the notion of, weaving.

In the library, I looked at lots of items, but in the end focused on seven or eight texts, and was entranced by the differences in their respective statuses. The texts on European weaving are packets of papers gifted by Pākehā families. I found it interesting in the first place that the families had kept these papers, which are ephemera, sometimes quite slight-seeming. But we can learn quite a lot these immigrants’ lives, the skills they brought with them and how they used them in the new place. In this context, weaving is a craft and has a use.

The Māori texts on weaving tend to be formal, published books, and to be very detailed on the production of weaving, such as works by Te Rangi Hiroa and Hirini Mead. The other important type of text on Maori weaving is where weaving is art, such as in *The Art of Maori Weaving: The Eternal Thread – Te Aho Mutanga Kore*, edited by Miriama Evans and Ranui Ngarimu.

These texts combined are the basis of ‘Warp and Aho’ (which is a work in progress). They are definitely the aho of the poem, the strong threads that create the garment from the long, downward strands or thoughts by me.

SOURCES FROM THE MUSUEM

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Auckland, N.Z.: Reed, 1999. Print.

'Order Book of the Taniko Weavers'. Auckland Museum. MS 2003 / 54. Folder 1. Print.

Grasett, K. [Spinning, Scouring and Dyeing, Pattern Drafting Weaving,.].

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Te Rangi Hīroa (P.H. Buck). *The Evolution of Maori Clothing*. New Plymouth, N.Z.: Board of Maori Ethnological Research, 1926. Print.

TOBY MORRIS



SHIELDS PROTECT FRONT LINERS AT BARRICADE, ROYAL TCE/SANDRINGHAM RD CORNER, AFTER BIKO MARCH HAD PASSED

Anthony Phelps

I SAW JOHN MINTO AT THE
FISH'N'CHIP SHOP ONCE.



I KIND OF KNEW WHO HE
WAS. KIND OF.

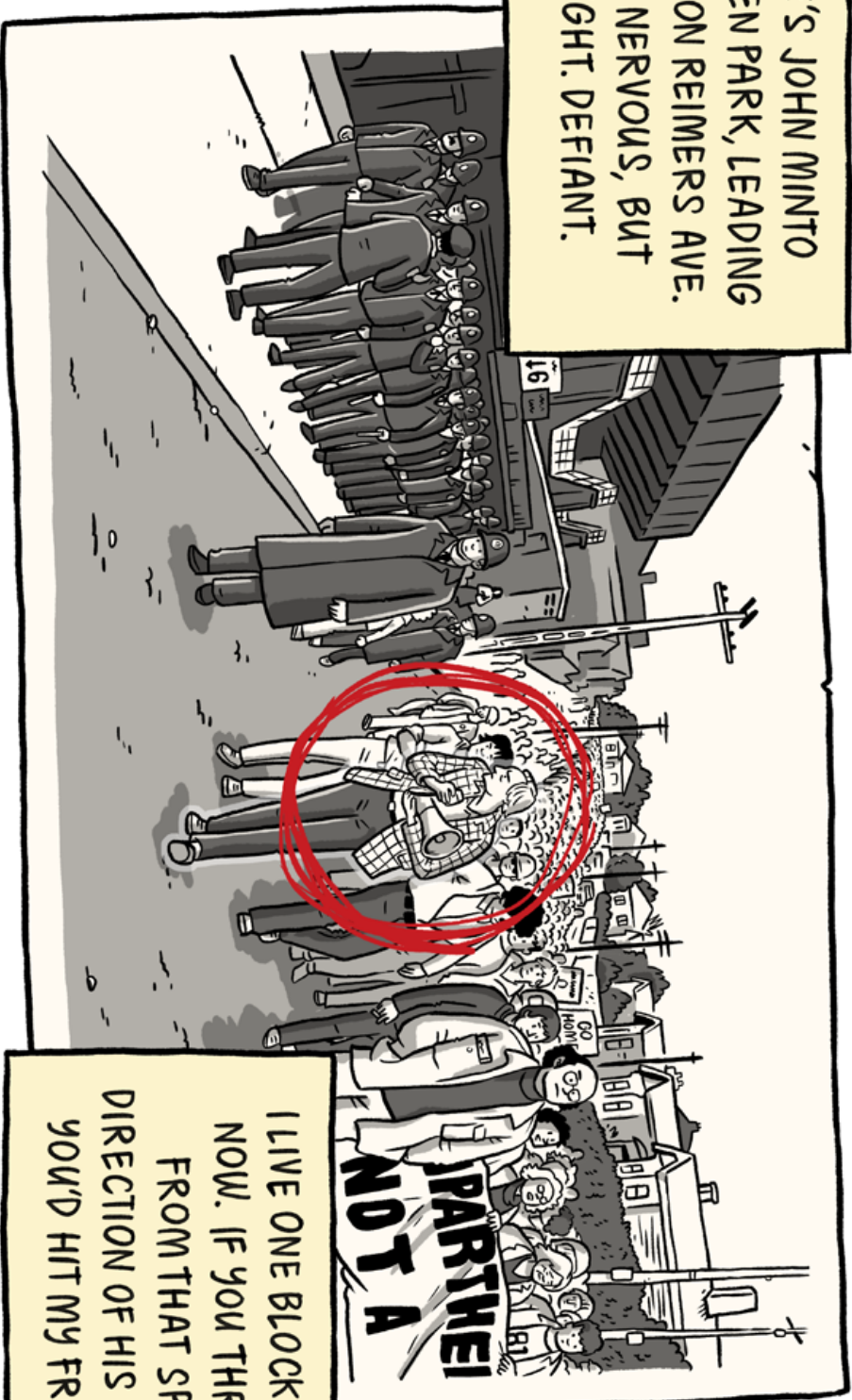


I WAS A BABY WHEN THE TOUR HAPPENED.
IT WAS LITERALLY A LIFETIME AGO.



I KNOW THE HISTORY, MORE OR LESS. I'VE
HEARD THE STORIES, BUT ONLY IN A DISTANT,
DISCONNECTED WAY. PEOPLE CALL IT A
TURNING POINT, BUT TO ME IT'S ALWAYS FELT
ABSTRACT AND IMPOSSIBLY FAR AWAY.

BUT HERE'S JOHN MINTO
OUTSIDE EDEN PARK, LEADING
MARCHERS ON REIMERS AVE.
HE LOOKS NERVOUS, BUT
FORTHRIGHT. DEFIANT.



I LIVE ONE BLOCK FROM HERE
NOW. IF YOU THREW A ROCK
FROM THAT SPOT IN THE
DIRECTION OF HIS MEGAPHONE,
YOU'D HIT MY FRONT PORCH.

THIS IS THE CORNER OF ROYAL TCE
AND SANDRINGHAM RD, ON THE
DAY OF THE FINAL TEST. THAT'S
MY STREET RIGHT THERE. MY
SENSIBLE QUIET STREET.

I WALK AROUND THAT CORNER
EVERY WEEKEND WITH MY KIDS.
WE SHARE A BACON SANDWICH AT
THE CAFE ON THE CORNER, GET A
JUNGLICIOUS POPSICLE FROM THE
DAIRY ON THE WAY HOME.



AND RIGHT HERE, ON
ON SLOW RD, IS WHERE
MY SON LEARNED TO
RIDE A BIKE.



HE GOT THE SPEED WOBLES ON
THIS HILL, SAILING GLORIOUSLY AND
UNCONTROLLABLY AWAY FROM ME
UNTIL HE HIT A CRACK IN THE FOOTPATH
AND CRASHED HEAD OVER HEELS,
CRYING LIKE A PROTESTOR BASHED
WITH A POLICE BATON.

IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THAT
THIS IS NEW ZEALAND. POLITE,
STAIID, CAREFUL NEW ZEALAND.
NO CONFRONTATION FOR US.
NO CONFLICT PLEASE.

BUT SOMETHING CAME TO THE
SURFACE THEN DIDN'T IT? DEEP ROOTED
TENSION BURST FORTH LIKE A VIOLENT
EARTHQUAKE, RIPPING STREETS INTO
JAGGED CREVASSESSES.

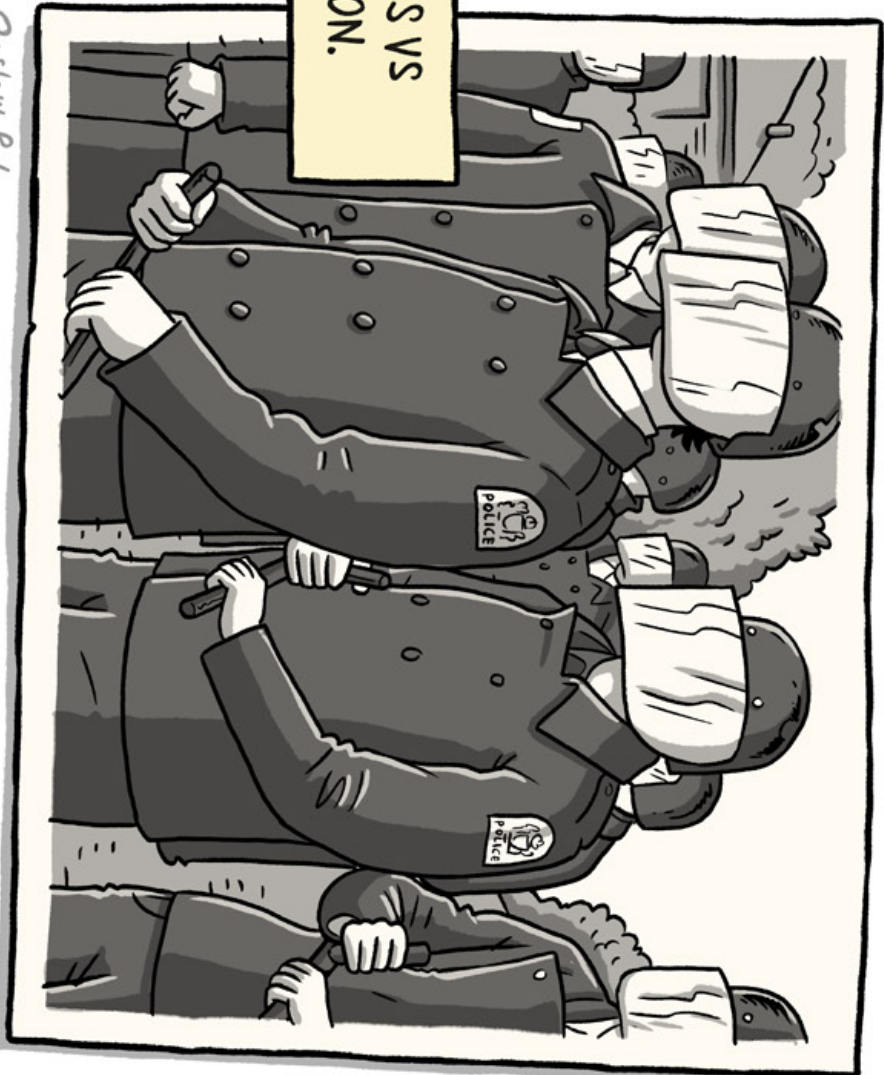


YOUNG VS OLD.



Protesters assemble, Dominion Rd

PROGRESS VS
TRADITION.



Onslow Rd

THE RIGHT THING TO DO VS THE WAY WE'VE
ALWAYS DONE THINGS THANK YOU VERY MUCH
SIT YOURSELF DOWN YOUNG MAN WE DON'T
TAKE KINDLY TO PEOPLE MAKING A FUSS.

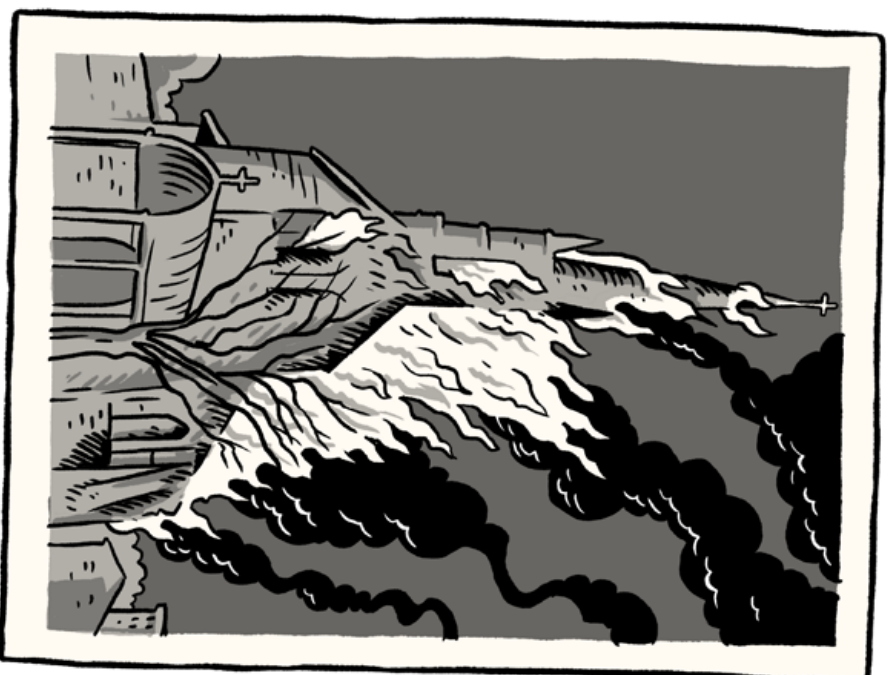


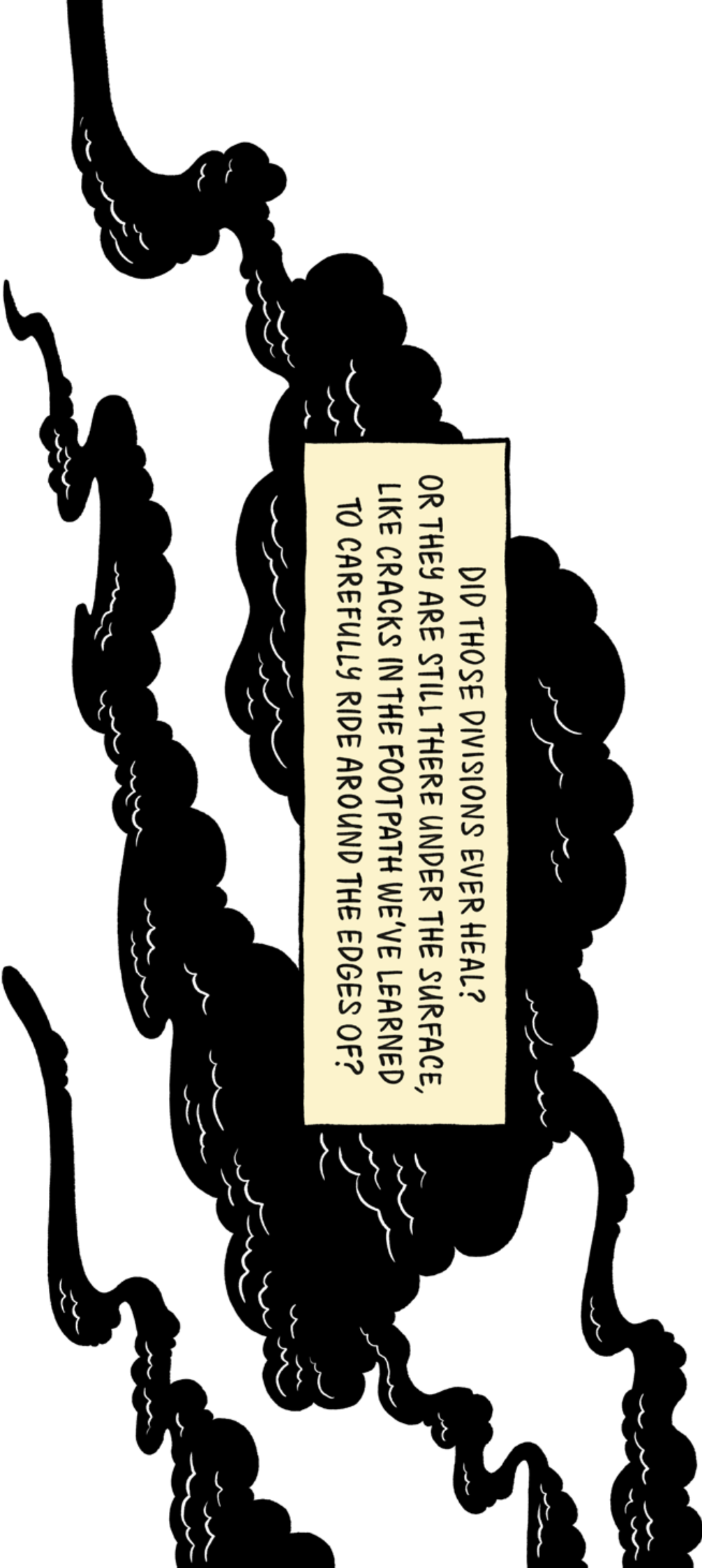
Angry rugby fans, Sandringham Rd



HERE'S JOHN MINTO,
BLOODY AND BEATEN.

HERE'S HIS FAMILY'S CHURCH IN
NAPIER, BURNT TO THE GROUND.



A large, stylized black cloud with a yellow rectangular box in the center containing text. The cloud has a thick, billowing appearance with white wavy lines indicating texture or movement. The text is written in a bold, sans-serif font, all in uppercase letters.

DID THOSE DIVISIONS EVER HEAL?
OR THEY ARE STILL THERE UNDER THE SURFACE,
LIKE CRACKS IN THE FOOTPATH WE'VE LEARNED
TO CAREFULLY RIDE AROUND THE EDGES OF?

OUR STREET IS
CHANGING.

THIS HOUSE IN
THE BACKGROUND IS
UP FOR SALE RIGHT NOW.
2.8 MILLION.



SOME SAY THEY'RE ASKING TOO
MUCH, BUT I THINK THEY'LL SELL IT.
ONE BY ONE THE RENTALS AREN'T
RENTALS ANYMORE.

WE GOT INVITED TO THE
NEIGHBOURHOOD BBQ, BUT
THE RENTERS FROM
THE FLATS WEREN'T THERE.



SOMEONE SAID "WE NEVER CAME TO YOUR
OPEN HOME" AND I DON'T KNOW IF THEY
WERE ONTO US. I DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING.
DIDN'T WANT TO MAKE A FUSS.

AT THE MUSEUM I FOUND A FLYER
THAT GOT TO ME. OF ALL THE ACTS
OF BRAVERY, THIS ONE REALLY
GRABBED ME.

OPPOSE APARTHEID - STOP THE TOUR
Neighbourhood Meeting

The reason why we turn up to the meeting is to show the white community that we are not just a group of people who are against apartheid, but that we are a community that is concerned about the future of our country. We are not just a group of people who are against apartheid, but that we are a community that is concerned about the future of our country.

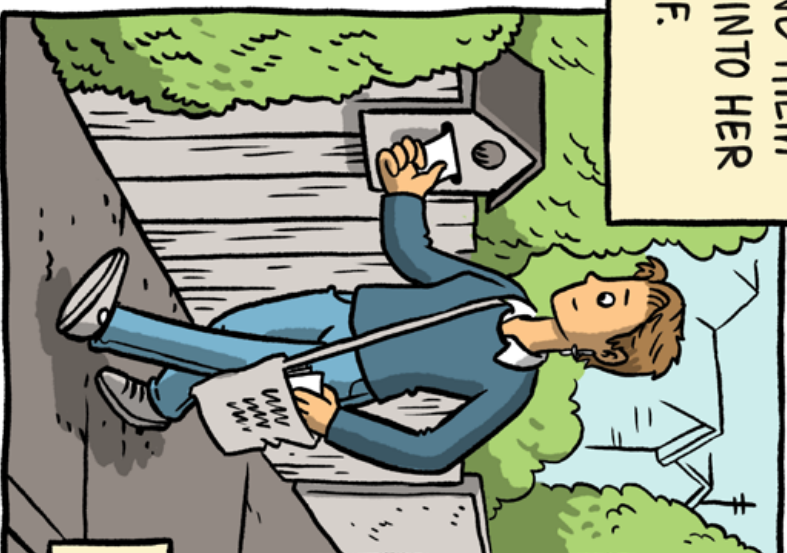
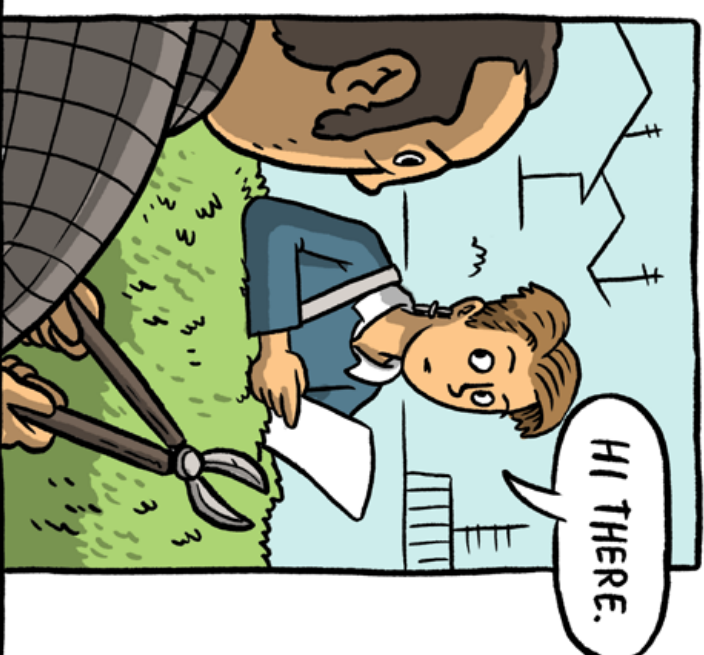
We are not just a group of people who are against apartheid, but that we are a community that is concerned about the future of our country. We are not just a group of people who are against apartheid, but that we are a community that is concerned about the future of our country.

St Austles Church Hall
Chr Seabrook & Morgan ave
Tues May 14th at 7-30 pm

~~~~~  
~~~~~  
~~~~~

IT WAS CALLING FOR A  
NEIGHBOURHOOD MEETING TO  
DISCUSS THE ISSUES OVER  
COFFEE AND SANDWICHES.  
THE LOCATION, DATE AND TIME  
WERE HANDWRITTEN AT THE  
BOTTOM.

IT'S A YOUNG WOMAN'S WRITING. OPEN  
AND WARM. I PICTURE HER WRITING THEM  
OUT, FILLING A BAG, HEADING OUT INTO HER  
STREET TO DROP THEM OFF.



WAS SHE SCARED? OR HOPEFUL?

IN THAT CLIMATE OF FEAR AND  
ANGER AND VIOLENCE, I THINK  
THAT WOULD'VE TAKEN GUTS.



SHE STOOD AND LOOKED HER  
NEIGHBOURS IN THE EYE AND SAID

"WE NEED TO TALK".



RIGHT DOWN THE ROAD FROM  
OUR FISH 'N' CHIP SHOP.

WRITTEN AND DRAWN FOR THE EVENT 'WRITING THE PAST: A MUSEUM  
COLLABORATION' AT THE AUCKLAND WRITERS FESTIVAL, 2017

THE HISTORICAL IMAGES REFERENCE PHOTOGRAPHY BY KAPIL ARN,  
ANTHONY PHELPS, SPENNEW AND OTHERS FROM THE BOOK 'BY  
BATONS AND BARBED WIRE; THE PHOTOGRAPHY OF JOHN MERCER,  
AND THE AUCKLAND MUSEUM'S COLLECTION OF TOUR EPHEMERA.