

Whiria te tangata

ARTIST STATEMENT:

The design for this engagement work is based on the saying 'Whiria te tangata' or 'weave the people together', which speaks directly to 'Tatau tatau, We Together'.

The four strands that have been identified as core strengths and sources of opportunity for Rotorua are represented by the flax fronds interwoven with the family to create something unique and sturdy – they take on a three dimensional appearance which signifies building blocks and creation of strong foundations.

The fine green flourish snaking its way through the image is representative of our geothermal environment. Hinemoa not only represents a cultural history and generational storytelling – she also stands watchful and contemplative of our natural environment, looking towards her desired destination of Mokoia Island. Her hair graphically represents the wairua running through the Rotorua community – a constantly flowing life force, like the water in our streams, lakes, forests and natural springs.

The family represent the people of the Rotorua community – some of their faces partially obscured so that the focus becomes more on connection, friends and whanau. The children represent the future generations of Rotorua residents and their concerns acknowledged.

The flower brings together elements of sustainability and is reminiscent of feathers worn in the hair. The pikoria (or single twist) visible in one of the petals refers to eternal emerging paths in life. It symbolizes the strength of the bond between two people, their loyalty and friendship. The koru refers to new shoots of the silver fern. The spiral shaped koru design is derived from this unfolding silver fern frond. The circular movement towards an inner coil refers to 'going back to the beginning'.

The nucleus of the flower is representative of Lake Rotorua and Mokoia Island, the caldera that we live in and the source of life in Rotorua. The stamen represent many people coming from many different places (elements of which are illustrated within the flower petals) to a central point here in Rotorua to begin a new life or to visit the source of our beginnings here.

Our iconic museum features in the distance beyond the flower petals, backed by a splash of water which indicates that there is life in our history.

The image as a whole has a feel of being 'unfinished' because we are at a point where we need questions asked and feedback received to decide how to progress further.

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