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Ayesha Green
Mum (May 1985), 2020

Ko *Mum (May 1985)*, he tārua o tētahi whakaahua o te whaea o Ayesha Green e haere ana ki tōna marae, a Ōtākou, i Hereweka – hei waewae tapu. Kei te tū ia ki te whatitoka o te whareniui a Tamatea. Kei te hopukia e te peita a Green (pērā i te whakaahua taketake) te ngākau hiamō, te maunawenawe hoki, me te whakahirahira o te whakapapa e taumanutia ai te tuakiri.

Mum (May 1985), 2020, replicates a photograph of Ayesha Green's mother visiting her ancestral marae – Ōtākou on the Otago Peninsula – for the first time. She poses in the doorway of the whareniui, Tamatea. Green's painting, much like the original photograph, captures an exciting yet tentative moment and reiterates the simple but crucial role of whakapapa in the reclamation of a deeper understanding of one's identity.



Ayesha Green
Mei, 2016

He ata o te ata, o te ata, o te ata. Ko tēnei te tauākī auau o Mei, i whakahokia ai te whakapakoko rauwhero o Pania of the Reef ki ngā tae o te ao ora. Ko Mei Robin, te kōhine i āta whāia tōna āhua mō te pane o te whakapakoko i te tīmatanga o ngā tau 1950, ko ia anō te kaupapa o te peita. Ko tā te taitara o te toi, arā, ko Mei, he whakamaumahara i a tātou ki te whakapapa me te mauri o ngā ata (o Pania anō).

An image, of an image, of an image, of an image. This is the echoing mantra of Mei, 2016, in which the iconic bronze statue of Pania of the Reef is recast into the tones of the living. Mei Robin, who in the early 1950s was the model for the statue's head, is the painting's subject. Titling the work Mei reminds us that images (and Pania) have whakapapa and mauri, or life force.

Ayesha Green (born 1987)

Kāi Tahu, Ngāti Kahungunu

Ayesha Green's painting is characterised by the block colour and flattened image style she uses to depict historical events and figures and moments from everyday life in Aotearoa New Zealand. Green lives and works in Dunedin, where she moved in 2018 to take up a residency at Blue Oyster Art Project Space. During that time, she researched nineteenth-century whaling in the area and traced her own whakapapa to Ōtākou, a small fishing village on the Otago Peninsula.

Green graduated with a Bachelor of Media Arts from Wintec in 2009, completed a Master of Fine Arts at the University of Auckland's Elam School of Fine Arts in 2013, and in 2016 added a Graduate Diploma in Arts from the University of Auckland, specialising in Museums and Cultural Heritage, to her qualifications. In 2019, she won the National Contemporary Art Awards with the painting *Nana's Birthday (A Big Breath)*, 2019, in which a tupuna wahine, or grandmother, is surrounded by her mokopuna as they blow out the candles on a birthday cake. The scene references mauri, or life force, and whakapapa. In June 2020, the sculptural work *Ko te Tūhono*, which the artist has described as a 'gateway connecting us with our deep ancestral ecologies', was selected to be installed in Dunedin's Octagon. Also in 2020, Green was a recipient of the Springboard Award from the Arts Foundation.

Key exhibitions include: *The Spirit of the Thing Given (Māori)*, RM Gallery & Project Space, Auckland (2017); *(Un)conditional II*, The Suter Art Gallery, Nelson (2018); *Māori Girl*, Blue Oyster Art Project Space, Dunedin (2018); *Two Oceans at Once*, ST PAUL St Gallery, Auckland (2019); *Living Portraits: Mata Raurangi*, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki (2019); *Elizabeth the First*, Jhana Millers Gallery, Wellington (2019); *Release the Stars*, Tim Melville, Auckland (2020). **MA**