

māori art for kids

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15 featured
artists

15 art activities
for kids



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tīmatanga kōrero
introduction

Māori art, the indigenous art of Aotearoa/New Zealand, is constantly evolving, embracing traditions of the past while drawing on contemporary culture and society. The information shared in this book is intended to enhance general knowledge of Māori culture through the artists’ work and to encourage children to become actively involved.

This book is ideal for anyone interested in learning about Māori art and culture; educators working with children in schools or the community; and especially children engaging with aspects of Māori culture through practical activities.

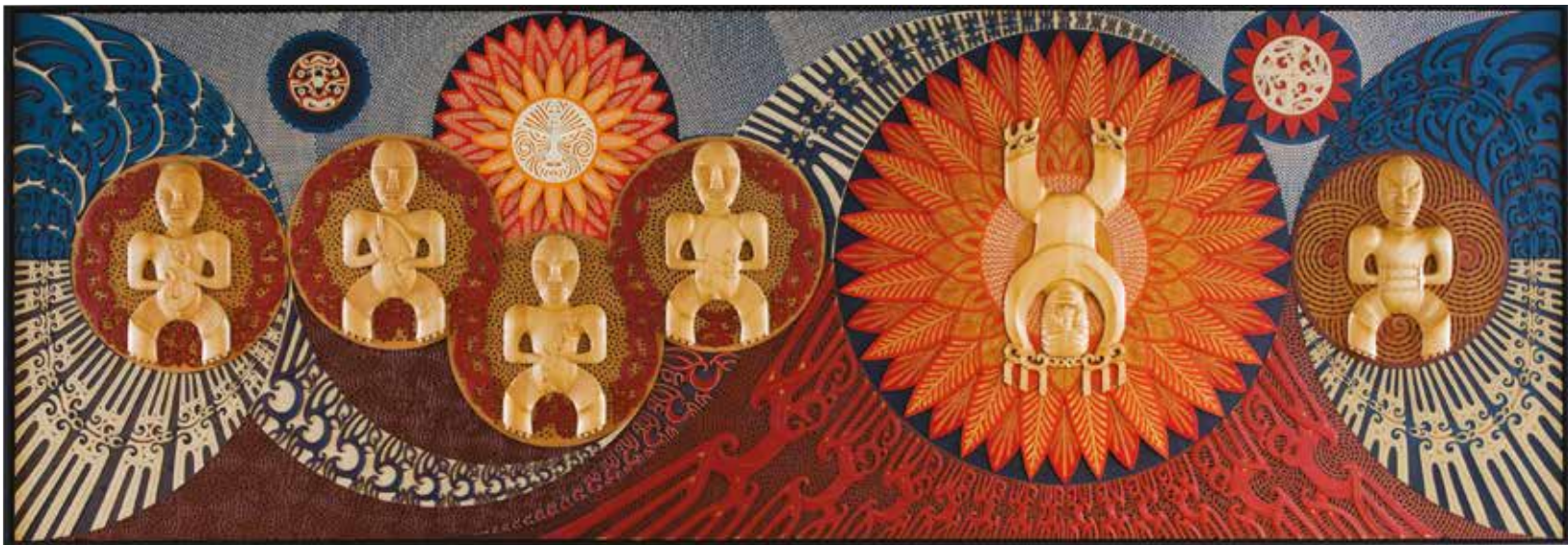
The suggested art project supplies are readily available from art and craft supply shops, supermarkets and your own home recycling. It helps to organise all the materials and tools before you start your chosen project.

General Suggestions and Tips

- Be innovative by incorporating your own ideas, style, materials and colour choices when making your projects.
- Wear old clothes, especially when using paint and glue.
- Always use non-toxic paint and glue.
- Protect work surfaces with a waterproof cover.
- Be safe with scissors by cutting away from yourself.
- Adult assistance is advised when using tools and appliances, especially for younger children.

Notes

It is important to acknowledge that there are differences in cultural practices, beliefs and artistic design, as well as variances in language dialect between the many iwi (tribes) and hapū (sub-tribes) of Aotearoa/New Zealand.



Te Wehenga o Rangī rāua ko Papa, 1975
DR CLIFF WHITING



Dr Cliff Whiting Master Carver/Educator/Painter/Print Maker

Te Wehenga o Rangī rāua ko Papa tells the story of how the sky and earth became separated. Depicted in the wall panel from left to right are Tangaroa, god of the sea; Haumia, god of uncultivated foods; Rongo, god of cultivated foods; Tūmatauenga, god of war and people; Tāne, god of the forest; and Tāwhirimātea, god of the wind (shown in the enlarged detail). Tāne is represented upside down in the process of separating Ranginui (sky father) from Papatūānuku (earth mother).

In the story, the children of Rangī and Papa lived in the perpetual darkness created by their parents’ locked embrace. The children desired to bring light into their world, prompted by a chance discovery that set in motion a plan to separate the parents, a plan opposed by Tāwhirimātea. After unsuccessful attempts by some of the brothers, the parents were eventually forced apart by Tāne.

poupou carved wall panel

About Poupou

Poupou are the wall-mounted figurative carvings found inside a whare tīpuna (ancestral Māori meeting house). Each poupou is unique, representing an important ancestor and/or historic event of the iwi (tribe) it belongs to. Whare tīpuna, also known as wharenui, are located throughout Aotearoa/New Zealand. Different carving styles are evident in poupou from region to region.

A legend from the Ngāti Porou iwi explains the origin of carving through the adventures of Ruatēpupuke, who discovered the house of Tangaroa deep below the sea while searching for his lost son. When Ruatēpupuke left the house of Tangaroa he took with him examples of poupou and tekoteko (carved gable figures), bringing the art of carving to the world.

ARTIST’S ADVICE

‘Your ideas can only be made real by you. Keep making, thinking and sharing with others. Find time for yourself. Be nosey, think of your own drawings and art but don’t be a copycat.’

Traditional style poupou.



Traditional Materials

Native timber, including tōtara, rimu, pūriri, kauri and maire.

Contemporary Materials

Introduced wood suitable for carving, MDF board, metals.

HOW TO MAKE A ...

poupou print

1



Fold the craft foam in the middle and cut it in half. Fold the white paper down the middle and cut to the same size as the craft foam.

2



Choose a poupou example from page 71 to copy, or come up with your own style. Use a pencil to lightly draw your poupou onto the craft foam.

3



When you're happy with your drawing, press over all the pencil lines gently but firmly with a bamboo skewer to create an indented line.

4



Squeeze out a blob of ink onto a piece of scrap cardboard, and spread it to evenly cover the roller.

5



Spread a thin layer of ink over the craft foam base, reapplying ink to the roller as needed.

6



Centre the white paper over the foam base, lightly press it down and smooth with your hand for even coverage. Lift paper at one corner to reveal the finished print.

These poupou prints make great greeting cards for family or friends. To make the cards, trim around the entire edge of the dry poupou print, leaving a 10 mm margin. Glue the print to an A5 piece of paper and mount on one side of a piece of folded A4 black card.

Materials & Tools

- ▶ A4 craft foam sheet
- ▶ A4 white paper
- ▶ A4 black card
- ▶ sharpened pencil
- ▶ bamboo skewer or pointed stick
- ▶ water based ink and roller
- ▶ scrap cardboard
- ▶ scissors
- ▶ glue stick

Alternative Materials

- ▶ Use water based acrylic paint and a paint brush instead of ink and roller.

Suggestion

- ▶ Try a kōwhaiwhai design (see page 72 for examples) instead of poupou.





Ipu Kākano (seed vessel), 2014
AMORANGI HIKUROA

Amorangi Hikuroa, Clay Sculptor

This artwork is called *Ipu Kākano*. I believe the role of an artist is to be the voice of their society, observing and harmonising with their surroundings. I make objects of beauty influenced by good form and line, stories old and new and everyday happenings. I look to the natural world for direction, to the simplicity and complexity of our environment, to fire, water, weather, the great oceans that link all lands, and the vast unknown universe.

ipu container

About Ipu

Ipu is the general term to describe a container or vessel. Traditional containers were used for holding water, preserved food, serving dishes, pigments and dyes. The feathers of a bird preserved inside the container were attached as a label marker. The outer surface was sometimes decorated with etched kōwhaiwhai patterns. Other types of ipu are kumete (carved wooden bowls) and pātua, made from the inner bark of the tōtara or mānuka tree.

Hinepūtēhue is the female deity of hue, and the most common types of container used in the past were the hue/tahā or gourd, grown from seed. They were also used as a buoyancy device and as musical instruments. Gourds can be cultivated by skilled gardeners to create long, thin or widened forms. A gourd's outer surface when dried is hard and durable, so once the inside seeds are removed and the top cut off they make excellent storage containers. Today hue are mostly kept as ornamental objects.

ARTIST'S ADVICE

‘We are clay, the body of the mother
... Never sell your land, without it
we fade from history.’



This is a dried hue (gourd), the outer shell hardened and the colour changed from green to brown during the drying process.

Traditional Materials

Hue/tahā (gourd), tōtara bark, mānuka bark, seaweed, wood.

Contemporary Materials

Clay (uku), glass.

HOW TO MAKE AN ...

ipu container

1



Blow up the balloon and tie a knot at the end. Rest the balloon on top of a jar as a working surface. Spread a plastic table cover underneath your workspace to protect the surface.

2



Prepare a bowl full of the tissue paper torn into thin, even strips. Dilute PVA glue in a jar by mixing 2 parts glue to 1 part water.

3



Paste strips evenly around the balloon, one strip at a time. Build up to at least seven layers – you don't need to wait for the glue to dry between layers. Flip the balloon regularly to apply layers at opposite ends.

4



To decorate, make koru or kōwhaiwhai patterns with string, and paste on with glue. Leave to dry completely. Once dry, cut the balloon's knot with scissors to deflate it.

Materials & Tools

- ▶ medium size balloon
- ▶ tissue paper
- ▶ string
- ▶ PVA glue
- ▶ water
- ▶ jar
- ▶ paste brush
- ▶ scissors
- ▶ plastic table cover

Alternative Materials

- ▶ Use recycled newspaper, or recycle the tissue paper from clothing patterns.

Suggestion

- ▶ Decorate with painted kōwhaiwhai patterns.

These make great decorative pieces to display on a shelf or as a hanging ornament.



Hei Tiki I, 2013
LEWIS GARDINER



Lewis Tamihana Gardiner, Carver

Hei tiki are very individual – they have their own human characteristics so no two should be the same. When I design and develop hei tiki, the fundamental concepts for me are that it needs a head, a body and an interpretation of arms and legs. With this in mind there are no limits to how far you can push the hei tiki form. This allows me to move from traditional forms to a very contemporary design without losing the identity of the hei tiki. I tend to use mainly New Zealand pounamu as material for hei tiki, but once in a while I will use jade from overseas. It depends whether the character of the jade has something that makes it special; bright colours or a quality that justifies its use for hei tiki.

The process of carving a hei tiki has sped up dramatically through the introduction of diamond tools, grinders and burrs, reducing the making time to days rather than months. The new process gives it a machine look, with harder edges and sharper angles, with the final hand rubbing and finishing giving it a softer feel. The old process of working pounamu gave it a soft, smooth finish that is hard to replicate with modern techniques. The hei tiki is the most time-consuming pendant carvers can make. I name any hei tiki that is personal to the wearer, though some commissioned hei tiki are named by the client before I start, which is their way of making a connection to the piece.

hei tiki neck pendant

About Hei Tiki

The word ‘tiki’ is used widely throughout Polynesia for the human form. The word ‘hei’ in this context means something worn around the neck, therefore a hei tiki is a neck pendant in human form. People of all ages and cultures can be seen wearing hei tiki in Aotearoa/ New Zealand, made from contemporary or traditional materials, and worn as everyday accessories or for a special occasion. The most highly prized hei tiki are made from pounamu or whalebone. Like many other important family taonga (treasures), hei tiki are often handed down from generation to generation, along with their own personalised name. Contemporary Māori artists create traditional and modern hei tiki, which are given names either by their maker or owner if they choose.

ARTIST’S ADVICE

‘If you are passionate about something do it because you love it.’



Hei Tiki II, 2013
Lewis Gardiner

Traditional Materials

Whale tooth, whalebone, pounamu, muka (flax fibre), pāua shell.

Contemporary Materials

Metal, glass, plastic resin, found materials, pāua shell, polymer clay.

HOW TO MAKE A ...

hei tiki neck pendant

1



Soften the clay to make it pliable by squeezing and rolling it with your hands on a flat surface.

2



Roll out a flattened oval piece about 5 mm thick. Press in the sides at the top third to create the neck shape.

3



Roll small pieces to make rounded strips that will form the eyes, arms, fingers, legs and mouth. Use the same colour if you prefer.

4



Gently press each shape onto the base (see the template on page 70).

5



Use the sharp end of a skewer to make decorative marks and lines. Make a hole in the top or side for threading string after baking.

6



Place the finished work on a foil-covered baking tray. Follow the baking instructions specific to your modelling clay – this hei tiki was baked at 130°C for 15 minutes. When it's completely cool, thread the prepared hole with string.



These hei tiki examples show different styles and colour combinations for you to try, or come up with your own design.

Materials & Tools

- ▶ oven-bake modelling clay
- ▶ bamboo stick
- ▶ oven

Alternative Materials

- ▶ Use cardboard instead of clay, layering a base with shapes to make features, arms and legs.

Suggestion

- ▶ Experiment by blending different colours of modelling clay, for example, combining blue and red makes purple, red and yellow makes orange, yellow and blue makes green.



Ake Ake, 2014
BRIAN FLINTOFF

Brian Flintoff, Master Carver

This porotiti was created to display the concept of the ‘wind children’ who take the player’s thoughts and aspirations along the cords and spin them out to the world. The koru cutouts represent these ideas, and the rows of manaia (spirit faces) show them ready to leap off on their journey. I have named it *Ake Ake* because I hope that its messages go on forever.

ARTIST’S ADVICE

‘Look for what you really want to do by exploring anything that excites your imagination because the skills learned will most likely help you anyway.’

porotiti spinning disc

About Porotiti

Porotiti are small spinning discs that create hypnotic movements and a soothing humming sound. Porotiti are part of the taonga puoro group of Māori musical instruments. In mythology porotiti are linked with Tāwhirimātea (guardian/god of the wind). Porotiti can also be grouped in the western musical category of wind instruments.

Porotiti were often used for play by young and old alike. Although very small and quiet, porotiti can gain the attention of a group of people by focusing them intently on the object to listen for the sound. The gentle vibrations are believed to aid in soothing chest congestion.

Porotiti can be flat and circular, or in the shape of a pointed leaf. They are played by a cord looped through two holes in the centre, threaded like a button hole. The disc is centred, twirled and spun repeatedly between the hands. When not being played, they make great pendants.

Traditional Materials

Stone, bone, wood.

Contemporary Materials

Plastic, string, cardboard.



A porotiti spinning.

HOW TO MAKE A ...

porotiti spinning disc



1 Cut lengths of double-sided tape and apply to base of button.



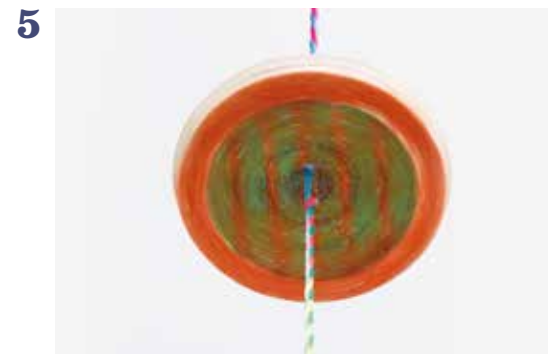
2 Pull off the top cover to reveal the sticky surface and sprinkle with glitter, using a container to catch any excess. Apply tape one length at a time to create a criss-cross abstract pattern inspired by weaving.



3 Measure out string the length of your arms, square to the width of your shoulders, double this length again and cut the end.



4 Thread string through the holes as pictured. Tie a firm knot to join the ends.



5 To spin, position the porotiti in the middle of the string and twirl it by winding the string in a circular motion in front of you. When it's fully wound, pull side to side continually. This continuous motion will create a humming sound.

Porotiti are fun to play with, once you get your disc spinning and humming – watch as the colours morph into each other.

Materials & Tools

- ▶ large button
- ▶ glitter
- ▶ double-sided tape
- ▶ string
- ▶ scissors

Alternative Materials

- ▶ Recycle a soft plastic jar lid instead of a button. Pierce holes 5 mm each side of the centre point, thread with string and decorate.

Suggestion

- ▶ Experiment with different types of string to get the best sound and spin.

