

**Media Release****Ceremonial entranceway for new convention centre**

A stunning white Ngutu, or ceremonial entranceway, will be a feature of the Te Pae Christchurch Convention Centre.

Called *Te Aika*, which means ‘the home people’ (Te Aika is a Ngāi Tahu version of Te ahi kā: ‘the home fires burning’), the artwork recognises the mana of local hapu, Ngāi Tūāhuriri.

The design has been inspired by the distinctive southern maihi, or diagonal bargeboards, on whare on the bank of the Horotueka (Cam River).

Other influences include: the kōtuku, which is considered a good omen; karanga weaving imagery as a tribute to Ngāi Tūāhuriri wāhine; the kahu huruhuru or cloak as a symbol of welcome, warmth, mana and protection; and Te Ao Mārama or world of life and light (wisdom and understanding).

Te Aika has been designed by artists Rachael Rakena and Simon Kaan and will be produced by SCAPE Public Art in collaboration with Matapopore.

“The ngutu design is based on the whare of Aperehama Te Aika which was located at Kaiapoi near where the former Kaiapoi Woollen Mills site is today and sketched by Charles Haubroe in 1855,” says Matapopore Trustee, Lynne-Harata Te Aika.

“Ngāi Tūāhuriri are proud to see a modern day version of the entranceway replicated in Te Pae’s courtyard design.”

Artist Rachael Rakena says the commission was very much a collaboration with Ngāi Tūāhuriri and their aspirations. “It was important for us as artists to ensure that the outcome reflected their mana and whakapapa of place.”

“It has been a great process working together and supporting each other through what is such a complex project,” says fellow artist Simon Kaan. “It has been a privilege to work on such a prominent public artwork for *Ōtautahi*, which we hope Ngāi Tahu *whānui* and the public of Aotearoa can embrace.”

“Public artworks, if successful, have the ability to help inform a collective understanding of place and its people,” says Simon. “That is our hope for *Te Aika*.”

Event visitors will gather at Te Aika for formal cultural ceremonies and be welcomed into the venue through the entranceway.

*Te Aika* will be constructed out of aluminium and is likely to begin to be installed mid-year. Supported by Creative New Zealand, *Te Aika* has also received industry sponsorship from Kirk Roberts Consulting, RCP and Beca.

ENDS



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