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Being, Flow and Knowledge in Māori Arts Education: Assessing Indigenous Creativity

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This article reflects on issues of Indigenous creativity in Māori arts education, along with what we see as problematic tensions of the assessment of intangible elements. Our writing is motivated by a desire to start a global dialogue on Indigenous/Māori epistemologies, pedagogies and ontologies, and the contradictions and tensions that threaten these through global assessment drives within schools. We argue that current student assessment regimes are being increasingly influenced by international neoliberal agendas, which focus on universal, measurable outcomes. By critically exploring the assessment of creativity in the arts from a Māori perspective, we reflect on several contradictions and tensions in current assessment drives within schools. In particular, the intangible dimensions of being and flow and their connection to creativity are examined, and we conclude with recommendations for further work in this area.

■ **Keywords:** assessing arts, creativity, Indigenous, Māori, being, neoliberalism

Penetito (2010) has argued that in colonised countries, social institutions continue to underserve Indigenous communities because they are increasingly influenced by globalising forces. We believe this growing influence is related to neoliberalism and consequently high stakes testing, as a mechanism to hold teachers and students to account not only for what is learnt in the classroom but also for what is good for the economy (Blackmore, 2000). Assessing Indigenous creativity shifts the emphasis from just outcomes (high stakes) assessment to the challenges of assessing culturally rich and sustaining experiences, which are embodied within a holisitic curriculum that articulates a sense of spirit, place and identity (Hindle, 2010; Penetito, 2009).

As this article is a reflection piece, we start with a brief *mihimihi* (introductory speeches). Mihimihi are a specifically Māori practice that take place at the beginning of *hui* (meetings), where all those who have gathered stand and introduce themselves. In doing so, each of the speakers in turn locates themselves across physical, cultural and social landscapes to establish connections to all those who are present. In this article, our mihimihi serves to locate ourselves as a diverse group of educators and researchers who share concerns about the influence of Western knowledges and practices on Indigenous/Māori epistemologies, pedagogies and ontologies.

Locating the Authors

Ko Rangitiko te maunga, Ko Parengarenga te moana, ko Ngatikuri te iwi (Rangitiko is my mountain, Parengarenga is my ocean, Ngatikuri are my people). I (Rawiri Hindle) am a New Zealand Māori man from Muriwhenua (the Far North tribes), Aotearoa. As the first author, I am a Māori educator and researcher. My teaching and research interests are situated in the realm of holistic Māori approaches to teaching and learning. In 2003, I was involved in developing national exemplars in the Māori arts for Māori immersion schooling. I worked with a class of 5 and 6-year-olds in a Māori immersion school, developing a performing arts exemplar. We used a local story about how Aoraki (Mt Cook) was formed and explored theatre techniques to tell that story. One of these techniques was based on encouraging the students to use moulding, flowing, flying and radiating to give quality to body movements (van Dijk, 2012). The outcome of the exercise aimed at getting the students to use their bodies and slow movement to mould the shape of Aoraki. In one of the activities we encouraged the students to move with the quality of flying

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'as if they were a leaf in the wind'. One boy started to move, and his imagination was so alive and in the moment that it was as if he was a leaf in the wind. The quality of his being was evident to all those watching.

This performance led me to question what it was that the boy was doing that had such a heightened impact on the experience of the performer and his audience. The interesting thing is that if we were to assess this performance according to skill-based performance criteria of the *Ngā Toi* (Māori arts) curriculum, we would perhaps look at: the child can rotate; the child can use levels; the child can move through space; and so on. But to me it was evident that what was missing in the performance criteria was the ability to assess the quality of his actions, the state of his being, the aliveness of his imagination, and the impact of the performance on the audience; in other words, the intangible aspects, the elements that are not easy to describe but made this performance stand out from the others. This analysis of the 'leaf in the wind' exemplar illustrates the need in arts education to acknowledge being, and to develop ways and processes to allow students and teachers to express being in and through Māori art.

Ko Taranaki te maunga, Ko Urenui te awa, Ko Urenui te marae, Ko Ngati Mutunga te iwi. Ko Hazel Phillips taku ingoa (Taranaki is my mountain, Ureni is my river, Urenui is my marae, Ngati Mutunga is my iwi, Hazel Phillips is my name). Although I have *whakapapa* (genealogical connections) to Ngati Mutunga, I grew up far from my ancestral homeland. Growing up in a city that was modelled on the dreams of its colonial forefathers in the 1950s–1960s exposed me to the diaspora that has defined the struggle that many Māori and Indigenous people the world over have, and continue to face. This struggle is multifaceted across a range of spaces, including culture and cultural identity, knowledges, values and practices, and ever constant. As sites of social, cultural and racialised power, classrooms continue to be one of the most significant spaces in which this struggle is played out. As an educationalist and researcher, I am concerned with the inequalities and disjunctions present in and perpetuated by New Zealand's education policies and practices, and more importantly, with the ways in which Māori negotiate, challenge and resist educational practices so that their educational and cultural aspirations can be realised.

I (Anne Hynds) am a *Pākehā* (New Zealand European) woman, born in the 1960s in Aotearoa. I identify as Pākehā to acknowledge the status of *tangata whenua* (people of the land) and my own White privilege. Most of my work involves trying to understand 'what counts' as culturally responsive and inclusive pedagogy that serve diverse groups of Indigenous students and their communities within Pākehā institutions. I am interested in the hidden and less visible aspects of culturally responsive and inclusive pedagogies. In previous research work, I investigated the collaborative partnership work of Māori and non-Māori teachers who were involved in culturally responsive reform in two mainstream schools. Over time, I became more aware of particular identities in culturally responsive reform work that were related to the norms, power and authority of dominant cultural elites across particular school communities (Hynds et al., 2014). These research findings indicated that culturally responsive practice can privilege particular cultural identities over others, fuelled by hegemonic schooling processes of assimilation.

Ko Tararua te Maunga, Ko Ohau te Awa, Ko Tanui te Waka, Ko Ngāti Raukawa me Ngāti Tukorehe ngā iwi, Ko Tukorehe te marae (Tararua is my mountain, Ohau is my river, Tainui is my tribal canoe, Ngāti Raukawa and Ngāti Tukorehe are my tribes, Tukorehe is my ancestral house, Lesley Rameka is my name). My experience as a teacher began in 1984 when I was elected to the position of Treasurer for a yet to be established *te kōhanga reo* (early years language nest), planned for our marae. Over the next nine years I went on to hold almost every position within the then firmly established kōhanga reo, including seven as a *Kaiako* (teacher). During this time I realised I needed more than goodwill to support my work with young children and so I enrolled in an early childhood teaching diploma program. This was the beginning of my academic journey as a teacher, researcher and academic. In previous research I have focused on *Kaupapa Māori* (Māori philosophy/worldview) assessment in early childhood education. This work involved working with kōhanga reo and Māori early childhood services to develop Māori understandings, framings and exemplars of assessment. My current research interests also include Kaupapa Māori/Polynesian infant and toddler provision, early childhood curriculum implementation, and continuity of learning from the early years through to compulsory education, from kōhanga reo to Kura Kaupapa Māori.

Background

A pressing issue in nations around the world is the need to improve teaching quality and learning outcomes for all students. In New Zealand this concern is most apparent in recent government initiatives that have been designed to address the educational debt for Indigenous Māori students in underperforming schools. Māori students are over-represented in suspension rates and special education programs, experience lower educational attainment, and leave school with fewer qualifications compared to students of European descent (Ministry of Education, 2006). There is an increased need to focus on the quality of teacher assessment of students' learning within schools (Timperley, Wilson, Barrar, & Fung, 2007) and the need for schools to account for Māori student achievement (Hynds et al., 2014).

Transforming the New Zealand education system to meet the needs of Māori people is essential and challenging given the historical role schools have played towards assimilation and replacing Māori knowledge, language, and

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culture with that of the New Zealand European colonisers. Devaluing continues as the school curriculum, structure, and culture still largely mirror the curriculum, structure and culture of the British colonial model (Penetito, 2010).

We argue in this article that the schooling system in Aotearoa generally operates in ways that subordinate Māori language, knowledge and pedagogy (Ka'ai-Mahuta, 2011) and that it is increasingly influenced by neoliberal school reforms (Luke, 2009; Olssen & Peters, 2005). Neoliberalism is a specific economic discourse associated with standardisation, free markets, globalisation and consumerism, and which has introduced new modes of schooling regulation into Western nation states (Luke, 2009; Olssen & Peters, 2005; Sleeter, 2012). These forms of regulation include an intense international focus on measuring student achievement through standardised tests and teacher performance within and across schools, in order to ensure economic productivity and competitive advantage within a global market. As Amrein and Berliner (2002) have argued:

> *This is an era of strong support for public policies that use high-stakes tests to change the behaviour of teachers and students in desirable ways. But the use of high-stake tests is not new, and their effects are not always desirable. (p. 2)*

There is controversy over high stakes testing, because of evidence of 'unintended consequences' associated with focusing on student test results rather than on student learning (Amrein & Berliner, 2002, p. 2). This includes increased student drop-out rates, teachers leaving the profession, and an increased focus on test preparation and performance that has resulted in schools cheating and manipulating the testing process (Amrein & Berliner, 2002). This focus on school regulation through the standardised measurement of student achievement and attainment in external tests is also a tool of colonisation and ongoing assimilation, and presents a complete disregard for Indigenous epistemologies, according to Brayboy and Castagno (2009). Therefore, neoliberalism and economic globalisation continue to present a real threat to the development of culturally responsive pedagogies (Sleeter, 2012) and sustaining cultural knowledge and practices valued by Indigenous communities (Luke, 2009).

While Māori immersion schooling presents a different and unique Indigenous philosophy of education, we believe it is not immune to these wider global and economic pressures. In the following section we present an overview of Māori worldviews and Māori immersion educational settings, often referred to as Kaupapa Māori schooling.

In reflecting on the tensions of assessing elements of Indigenous creativity that are intangible and spiritual, we argue that by employing a place-based and holistic Māori worldview to teaching and learning, the educational process is not driven solely by the need to achieve a measurable outcome but by an overall desire to develop and contribute to the expression of self, making tangible and intangible connections to our world. In doing so, the paper highlights challenges and implications that current assessment practices in the arts, with its emphasis on outcomes driven learning, has for Indigenous knowledge and pedagogical practices.

Holistic Approaches to Learning

> *If one is upon a canoe, transversing the ocean at dawn, one sees the rising sun. Now behind the canoe, you will see 'sea foam' or Hukatai. You have transversed and are transversing the pathways of knowledge from the beginning. Now as you travel towards the rising sun and you look at the 'tail' of the canoe, at Hukatai, you will also see Rehutai, a rainbow within the sea foam that rises alongside the canoe. Now that is the symbolism. Knowledge (mātauranga) is different from knowing (mohio) when illumination of the spirit arrives (symbolised by the rainbow effect in the water), then one truly knows, according to your ancestors. When the illumination of the spirit arrives in the minds of a person that is when knowing occurs. For knowledge belongs to the head and understanding belongs to the heart. When a person understands both in the mind and the spirit then it is said that the person truly 'knows' (mohio). (Marsden, as cited in Royal, 2003, p. 79)*

The metaphor above by Rev Māori Marsden, who was a prominent Māori elder, forms the starting point for our reflection. This metaphor stresses the importance of a holistic approach to learning that is knowing through the mind, body, and soul. This concept is reflected within Māori educational realms such as the New Zealand Ngā Toi (Māori arts) curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2000) statement. This national curriculum statement was written for teachers and students in Māori immersion schooling systems in Aotearoa/New Zealand. These immersion settings, presenting alternatives for children wishing to learn in the Māori language, are Kura Kaupapa Māori and Whānau Rumaki (Immersion classes) in general-stream education. The writers of this curriculum acknowledge the significance of the spiritual and intangible dimensions of art, life, and learning. The inclusion of these dimensions heralds an approach to arts education that considers understanding (mind), doing (body) and being (soul) as important for student learning within Māori immersion school settings.

To further emphasise this integrated pathway to teaching and learning, the draft Ministry of Education's *aromatawai* (assessment) discussion paper, Rukuhia Rarangahia (Ministry of Education, 2011), also adopts a holistic approach by stressing the importance of *ngā tairongo*, the six senses of hearing, sight, taste, smell, touch, and intuition. The importance of all the senses in a learning framework is associated with an integrated approach to students' learning and suggests an acknowledgment of the importance of being. Emphasising ngā tairongo as components within an educational process demonstrates that Māori attach importance to concepts that relate to values,

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beliefs, the learners' being and the intangible dimensions of learning processes, and sees these components as necessary for teaching and learning.

Yet, from an analysis of the Ngā Toi curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2000) and the discussion paper, there is no explanation about how these dimensions might be included or implemented within teaching practice. This presents a dilemma for practitioners in Māori immersion school settings, given that from a Māori perspective being is recognised and acknowledged as important. Further, it is noted that in the development of the new national curriculum for Māori immersion schools, Te Marautanga o Aotearoa (Ministry of Education, 2007), the aesthetic dimensions of *wairua* (spirituality), *te mana* (respect), *te ihi* (essential force), *te wana* (authority), *te wehi* (awe) and *te mauri* (life force) are missing from the Ngā Toi section of the document. Given that it was the inclusion of these dimensions within the Ngā Toi curriculum that acknowledged the importance of being, it is disconcerting that they are missing from the Māori immersion curriculum document. We assert that being is not separate from understanding and doing; it is the interconnectedness of these three concepts that allows for a deeper knowing.

Kaupapa Māori Schooling

In Aotearoa/New Zealand over the last 20 years, Māori immersion schooling has paralleled the renaissance of Māori language that began with the *Kōhanga Reo* movement (early childhood Māori immersion nests). At the primary school level (ages 5–12 years), the current alternatives for children wishing to learn in Māori language are *Kura Kaupapa Māori* and *Whānau Rumaki* (Immersion classes) in general-stream education. Kura Kaupapa Māori and Whānau Rumaki are for children learning in the medium of the Māori language and through Māori pedagogy and ways of knowing. They are set up independently of general-stream schools, though most operate under the umbrella of the Ministry of Education. At the secondary school level (ages 13–17 years), there is a growing number of *Whare Kura* (Schools of Learning), secondary equivalents of Kura Kaupapa Māori, where the teaching and learning is conducted primarily in Māori. They are often physically attached to Kura Kaupapa Māori schools. In some tribal areas, all three levels — Kōhanga Reo, Kura Kaupapa Māori and Whare Kura — operate inside the same establishment. They are often tribally based and physically positioned around a marae, an area centred in front of a large meeting house, and where the people have ancient connections to the land.

Kura Kaupapa Māori and Whare Kura each in turn came about through pressure from the Kōhanga Reo movement, which developed to cater for children learning at the pre-school level in the Māori language, from a Māori perspective. Kōhanga Reo was started at a grassroots level as part of a thrust to save the Māori language and also to empower Māori to take control of their own destiny. The families manage the schools themselves.

The Ngā Toi Curriculum in Kaupapa Māori Schooling

Māori immersion schooling and Kura Kaupapa are not just about the transmission of *reo* and *tikanga* (Māori language and customs). Māori perspectives also need to consider the creation of place-based Māori curriculum and the implementation of Māori pedagogy, particularly in relation to the preservation of cultural traditions. Royal (1998) implies that when working within a Māori paradigm we acknowledge the importance of coming from a *whakapapa* (genealogy ties to people and phenomena) base and building from this foundation to create new possibilities. This is an important idea when considering teaching and learning within the 'Māori arts'. In creating and implementing Māori arts programs it is important to explore innovative ways to implement creative performing arts programs that express understanding, skills, and being.

The Māori arts document is different to the general-stream document as it was written by Māori, in the Māori language, and from a Māori worldview. The philosophy and methodology differ, particularly with the integrated nature of the Ngā Toi disciplines. The Māori document identifies the three disciplines of *Ngā Mahi a Te Rēhia* (dance and drama), *Toi Ataata* (the visual arts) and *Toi Puoro* (music).The English document separates dance and drama, whereas in the Ngā Toi curriculum statement, the dance and drama disciplines are presented together under the title 'Ngā Mahi a Te Rēhia'. This discipline includes areas such as story-telling, *whaikōrero* (speech-making), weapon training, games, *korikori tinana* (Māori movement), dances of different cultures, stilt walking, and ritual encounter such as *pōwhiri* (welcome ceremony). Traditions such as pōwhiri and whaikōrero, expressed as Ngā Toi disciplines, aim to manifest the aesthetic dimensions of wairua, te mana, te ihi, te wana, te wehi and te mauri.

The Ngā Toi document was the first of the Māori curriculum statements where the writers were given freedom to develop the content coming from a Māori worldview. However, the format for the developments of this document, like other curriculum statements, had to be written within the Ministry of Education guidelines. Incorporated in these guidelines was the need for a structure that encapsulates achievement objectives, skills, and measurable learning outcomes. It is important to note that such an assessment focus can exacerbate the dominant (Western) cultural perspective and omit alternative cultural perspectives (Gregory & Williams, 2000).

Indigenous Knowledge Systems

The consideration of teaching and learning from a Māori perspective, and particularly when situated in kura

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Kaupapa Māori paradigms, needs to be researched and embedded in Māori ways of knowing. In the postmodern world, the emphasis of an educative process, in general, is on the ability to know something and to do something. There is little evidence that value or expression is given to being. The national curricula reflect this fixation with understanding and skills by focusing on the creation of tangible learning outcomes that need to be seen to be achieved (Hindle, 2010). Little or no attention is given to the intangible aspects within a learning process.

Royal (1998) cites whakapapa that acknowledges well-being as the outcome of an educative process. Such a perspective on Māori educational praxis incorporates Marsden's concept that the physical and spiritual worlds are linked by whakapapa and that everything in the universe is interconnected (Royal, 2003). This essentially holistic perspective is further endorsed by Hemara (2000) when he explains that the 'physical and the spiritual worlds were so intertwined that it was impossible to separate the two' (p. 70).

In regards to the *Whare Wānanga* (pre-European institutes of higher learning), it is evident that pre-European Māori ways of knowing 'cross the veil' between the physical and spiritual worlds. These concepts are generally highly symbolic, based on elaborate rituals grounded in mythology, whakapapa and *whanaungatanga* (relationships). Marsden's concept that the physical and spiritual worlds are linked by whakapapa and that everything in the universe is interconnected (Royal, 2003) is endorsed by literature that supports holistic approaches to teaching and learning. Marsden (as cited in Royal, 2003) states that all things in the universe are woven together by the *tohunga whakapapa* (whakapapa expert) in a fabric of whanaungatanga. This Māori worldview is key to understanding Māori ways of operating within pre-European contexts such as Te Whare Wānanga, and philosophically within present day Kura Kaupapa schooling.

Students' studies within the Whare Wānanga were dedicated to one of the deities; for example, *Tānemahuta* (the realm of the forest). Marsden declared that if one is dedicated to Tāne, then he is sent into the forest to meditate and fast. Marsden states that:

> *The goal is for the spirit of Tāne to come to you, to teach you things of the spirit so that you will know and understand all the things that have been taught to you under the aegis of your 'baptism', secondly, so that you may see and understand new knowledge. (As cited in Royal, 2003, p. 78)*

This pedagogical approach implies that the learning unfolds and manifests from the students' own experiences. When immersed in a certain environment for a good period of time we see things related to that environment in a different and deeper way. We become physically, mentally and spiritually attuned to that environment. The notion of learning unfolding sits within a Māori whakapapa perspective that has to do with three states of being. From a Māori whakapapa perspective, these three states of being are expressed as *Te Korekore, Te Po*, and *Te Ao Mārama.*

Te Korekore is the realm of potential being; Te Pō is the realm of becoming; and Te Ao Mārama is the realm of being. Marsden stated that 'Te Ao Mārama replenishes the stuff of the universe as well as creates what is new' (as cited in Royal, 2003, p. 21). We view Te Korekore, Te Po, and Te Ao Mārama as a metaphor that describes a process of continuous creation and recreation. Te Ao Mārama is often translated as 'the world of light'; light in this context refers to natural phenomena, as well as the metaphorical sense of enlightenment or growing understanding of how things are. Te Korekore, Te Po and Te Ao Mārama philosophy allows for phenomena to 'unfold' or 'come into existence' through making space for whatever arises to manifest. Te Korekore as the space for potential being is situated in the mind or the understanding, Te Po as the space for becoming is situated in the body or the doing, and Te Ao Mārama as the space for being is situated in the soul. These three states of being serve as a process for learning that acknowledges the importance of creativity and nurtures the development of the being. Given that Māori whakapapa attribute key teaching and learning processes to being, the next section focuses on concepts of being as a way to further examine why being is important to Māori views on teaching and learning, as well as how being would manifest within a teaching and learning process.

The Concept of Being

An idea expressed in this article is that being is what gives rise to a heightened sense of creativity and use of imagination, allowing for the intangible qualities of a learning process to manifest. Marsden's description of the Whare Wānanga invokes a sense of oneness with the environment, learning to be, or become attuned to the tangible and intangible qualities of life and learning through ngā tairongo (the six senses).

Being present is associated with what Marsden refers to as being 'in flow' with the universal process (as cited in Royal, 2003). Jaworski (1998) reinforces this idea by stating 'A shift from seeing the world made up of things to seeing a world that's open and primarily made up of relationships' (p. 10), which is critical to bringing about change. Through Māori eyes, every living thing in the world is in a state of whanaungatanga. There is a sense of oneness with the environment that invokes a perception of being attuned to the universal flow.

The concept of flow experience implies being present or in the moment (Czikszentmihalyi & Robinson, 1990). Thus, shifting into a being paradigm requires a shift in thought patterns that move from the idea that the future is fixed to one where the future is fluid; just like nature and everything in the universe, life is in continual motion.

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This perception opens up the world of possibility. Jaworski (1998) talks about a commitment of being as part of the unfolding process. He says that it is in this state where people experience these shifts in mind that we create a phenomenon called 'predictable miracles' (p. 14). This idea is associated with van Dijk's (2007) concept of presence. It is this shift in mind that allows the space for creativity. When there is no past or future in our thoughts then we are present. In this space of nothing, the creative potential is heightened. Marsden (as cited in Royal, 2003) refers to this as space as 'Te Korekore', or the realm of potential being. Jaworski (1998), van Dijk (2007) and Marsden (as cited in Royal, 2003) acknowledge that the possibility for creativity happens in the space of 'nothing' — physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually.

Within the learning context, Czikszentmihalyi and Robinson (1990) qualify the notion of being 'in flow' by describing flow as having a sense of exhilaration about what you are doing, being in a zone or a place where nothing else matters but the activity itself. Their philosophy on flow experience is described as a state where people are so engrossed in the experience that they lose track of time. In a flow experience the emphasis is about the quality of an experience rather than measuring an outcome. Indeed, the outcomes of aesthetic flow experiences 'are difficult to measure, codify, or quantify because it leads to conversations that are rich with stories and memories that are surprisingly and sometimes emotional' (Murphy Augustine & Zoss, 2006, p. 91). According to Murphy Augustine and Zoss (2006), students who engaged in such rich learning found their experiences so engaging that they wanted to reproduce them. Dewey (as cited in Kesson & Henderson, 2010) called this an educative experience because the students sought more opportunities to replicate their experiences. It is precisely educative experiences such as these that challenge schools to provide learning opportunities that go beyond utilitarian learning outcomes to engage and motivate students to become deeply involved in their learning (Kesson & Henderson, 2010).

The flow experiences of teachers are critical to their students' learning outcomes. Basom and Frase (2004) applied the concept of flow to teachers' classroom practices and found that when applied in the classroom setting, the teachers' experiences enhanced student learning. They identified a range of ways in which flow was embodied in teachers' practices, particularly where practitioners connected theory with practical application. The idea of connecting theory to practice is important as it implies a 'learning through' rather than a 'learning about' pedagogical approach, shifting the focus from a cognition domain to a 'mind, body, soul' or holistic domain. Thus, improving classroom experiences for teachers is key to transforming the educational experiences for students. This is hugely challenging on two counts. First, in our view, the impetus for current curriculum and assessment practices focuses on outcomes rather than processes, and measures what learners know and can do about something, disregarding the intangible qualities implicit within the learning, as well as an embodied way of understanding phenomena. Second, a shift to a holistic teaching and learning environment in classrooms requires a whole child approach in which attention is given to a 'variety of contextual, instructional, developmental, and interpersonal factors beyond the preoccupation with educational "outcomes"' (Shernoff & Czikszentmihalyi, 2008, p. 143).

Being in the Indigenous Classroom

The idea that learning 'unfolds' or 'comes into existence' may be a difficult concept for many teachers to comprehend yet alone manifest in practice when the focus for learning is clearly stipulated by learning outcomes that need to be achieved — an approach that implies a linear style of learning. This highlights a fundamental clash in pedagogical approaches to learning. Educators working in Māori immersion settings aim to develop and implement educational philosophies and frameworks for teaching and pedagogical practices based on Māori (holistic) ways of knowing, while at the same time needing to meet the requirements of government-led general stream educational philosophies and practices that are situated in preparing students for work. This presents the dilemma of having to reconcile the rediscovery or reinvention of traditional knowledge with existing and emerging new knowledge. To illustrate this phenomenon, we use a metaphor where the mountains represent traditional knowledge, the sea represents new knowledge, and the shoreline represents the (fluctuating or ever-changing) space where new knowledge, over time, is Indigenised (Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo, 2002). The metaphor invokes a sense of ongoing tension between the mountains, the sea, and the shoreline: pressure points, tectonic plate movements, eruptions, treacherous underwater — visible or less visible (Hynds, 2007) — terrains, rising sea levels, and so on. As a result of this tension, the question needs to be asked: How do teachers in Māori immersion school settings manage to walk the shoreline and create new knowledge or new ways of being that reflect traditional knowledge yet meet the requirements of new knowledge? We assert that it is these spaces of tension/dilemma/interface that provide the opportunity for us to create new knowledge and ways of being.

Creating new knowledge based on the notion of 'being' recognises a deeper knowing of things that comes from a holistic approach to learning in and through the arts. This approach acknowledges the interrelatedness of understanding, doing and being, and how being can be fostered in arts education. Truly 'knowing' something comes from a holistic approach that acknowledges that understanding, doing and being are inseparable and go hand in hand. When we understand something in our thoughts, actions and being soul, *wairua*, we truly 'know'. There is a sense of the 'greater self'. When we are open and engaged with

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our mind, body and soul, we are experiencing the greater self. When we are closed off to the experience we are putting forward our 'lesser self'. The greater self is open and engaged, whereas the lesser self is deluded (Ikeda, 2003). The higher self is aiming to reach higher values that recognise spiritual development. Yihong interviewed Mario Solis, who stated that the journey of the holistic educator is about 'reaching the higher values of themselves, allowing people to manifest the excellence within themselves, and in turn allowing others to manifest their inner resources, creativity and excellence' (Yihong, 2002, p. 27). Yihong's view resonates with the notion that 'being' is what gives rise to higher self.

To experience these phenomena of knowing the 'greater self' or 'truly knowing' in the arts we need to combine our understanding of the topic — for example, dance — with our practice. When we understand the movement in our minds and our bodies, only then can we lift the performance to another level through our being (soul, wairua). Added to the idea that being lifts the performance to another level, it is important to reflect on the notion that traditional concepts such as pōwhiri (welcome ceremony) and whaikōrero (oratory), expressed as Ngā Toi disciplines, aim to manifest the aesthetic dimensions of ihi, wehi, wana, mauri, and wairua. Although these dimensions are viewed as important to Ngā Toi processes and practices, there is no exploration in regards to how a teacher would work to ensure these expressions would manifest.

Concepts such as pōwhiri and whaikōrero are not only based in tradition, they form an important part of customary Māori practices situated in everyday life, from the past and in the present. The manifestation of the aesthetic dimensions of ihi, wehi, wana, mauri, and wairua, as highlighted in the Ngā Toi curriculum, is an important concept to grasp, for without these dimensions the performance may be highly skilful and show a depth of student understanding about the art form but would be lacking transmission of the being to an audience. The expression of these traditions through the being is integral to maintaining the integrity of these traditions. How do we as teachers access notions of being that express these aesthetic dimensions? One example is through the use of gesture. Gesture is an important element in *Māori kapa* (dance) and is often expressed in *haka* through *pūkana* (dilating of the eyes performed by both sexes), *whētero* (the protruding of the tongue) and *pōtētē* (the closing of the eyes at different points of the dance). In his book Haka, Kāretu (1993) implies that it is the expression of these gestures that communicate wairua (spirituality) and lift a performance from mediocre to extraordinary.

Conclusion

Given that being is the concept that is not articulated philosophically or pedagogically in the Ngā Toi curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2000), this article has attempted to present ideas about being within educational contexts and suggests ways forward. For the purpose of this article, being in arts education has been articulated in three ways: self-realisation, transformation, and presence. Being, expressed as self-realisation, is when individuals or groups shift something in their being, causing a change in their environment and in the way they see or do things (Jaworski, 1998). This type of being is associated with the mind or understanding, where the realisation of something that has happened in our past has determined our present and future. Freire states that because humans are conscious beings there exists a dialectical relationship between the determination of limits and freedom. He says that as we locate the seat of our decisions in ourselves and in our relationship with the world and others, we can overcome the situations that limit us (Freire, 1996). Through this realisation we are able to transform aspects of our lives that are not working, or not working as well as we would like. Being, expressed as transformation, is being that is associated with the imagination and/or wairua and is something that can happen on the 'spin of a dime'. It is instant and spontaneous. Marx (1973, as cited in Newman & Holzman, 1997) infers that the point of philosophy should be to change the world. He quotes revolutionary activity as the driving force and something that requires action. Transformational shifts in our being are associated with the desire to change the way things are. These shifts in being are essentially related to self-transformation and open up possibilities to transform communities. Being expressed as presence is associated with the body and the ability to do something and be sensually alive in the moment. These three pathways offer practical ways of addressing being within the context of professional learning development, arts education and education in general.

The view that true knowing is a knowing of the mind, body and soul recognises that aesthetic flow in the classroom sets the stage for enriched experiences of what counts as learning and knowledge, and where students can be emotionally, intellectually and physically engaged in constructing knowledge (Murphy Augustine & Zoss, 2006). These descriptions of the flow experience resonate with Marsden's (as cited in Royal, 2003) and Jaworski's (1998) views about being in flow with the universal process, as well as highlighting that the learning process needs to engage students' minds, bodies and souls. These philosophical views are in contrast with an over-prescribed, outcomes-driven approach to learning that focuses on what students know through their mind, not bodies, not souls.

The purpose of this article was to highlight the problematic nature of current neoliberal assessment pressures in measuring the intangible aspects of being (wairua/soul, imagination and intuition), within Indigenous arts based practices. It is our recommendation that further research is needed to explore, develop and test innovative and

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effective ways in which the above elements of being can be incorporated in a meaningful way in the assessment of creativity in the arts.

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Ko Tararua te maunga
Ko Ohau te awa
Ko Tainui te waka
Ko Ngāti Tukorehe me Ngāti Raukawa ngā iwi

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