

SHANNON TE AO
MĀ TE WĀ
MOSSMAN, WELLINGTON
12 SEP – 10 OCT 2020

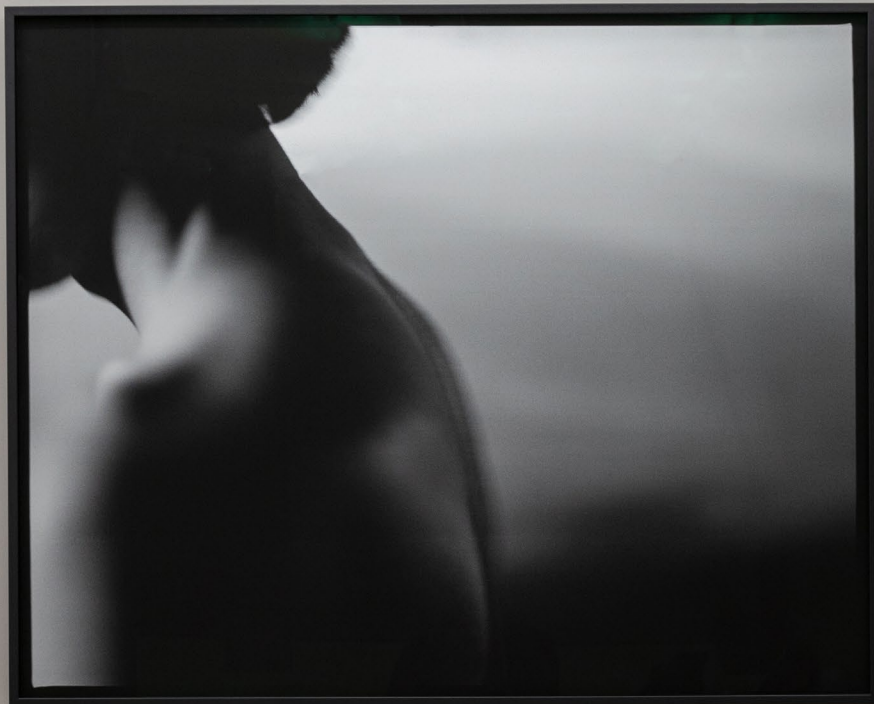
MOSSMAN

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Shannon Te Ao
Mā te wā, 2020
installation view: Mossman, Wellington
photo: Harry Culy



Shannon Te Ao
Pūkahukahu, 2020
Pigment inks on Hahnemuhle Potorag Ultra smooth
920 x 1145mm (frame)
Ed. 3 + 1AP



Shannon Te Ao
Maikuku, 2020
Pigment inks on Hahnemuhle Photorag Ultra smooth
920 x 1145mm each (frame)
Ed. 3 + 1AP



Shannon Te Ao
Mā te wā, 2020
installation view: Mossman, Wellington
photo: Harry Culy



Shannon Te Ao
Korokoro, 2020
Pigment inks on Hahnemuhle Photorag Ultra smooth
920 x 4880mm overall
Ed. 3 + 1AP



Shannon Te Ao
Mā te wā, 2020
installation view: Mossman, Wellington
photo: Harry Culy



Shannon Te Ao
Mā te wā, 2020
installation view: Mossman, Wellington
photo: Harry Culy



Shannon Te Ao
Pīpīwharauoa II, 2020
Pigment inks on Hahnemuhle Photorag Ultra smooth
920 x 6125mm overall
Ed. 3 + 1AP



Shannon Te Ao
Mā te wā, 2020
installation view: Mossman, Wellington
photo: Harry Culy



Shannon Te Ao
Mā te wā, 2020
installation view: Mossman, Wellington
photo: Harry Culy

*Te Whiti o Rongomai's whakatauākī goes, "Ko te pō te kaihari i te rā. Ko te mate te kaihari i te oranga."
The night is the bringer of the day. Death is the bringer of life.**

Mossman is pleased to present *Mā te wā*, a solo exhibition of new work by Shannon Te Ao.

Working predominantly with performance and film, Te Ao's elegiac installations explore fraught dynamics of indigeneity, language, and loss. Richly layered, Te Ao's works enact a compression wherein past and present co-exist, and daily life is permeated with multifarious social, political, cultural, and philosophical histories.

The photographs in *Mā te wā* take their starting point from the artist's own oeuvre, using footage from his archive as filmic backdrops. Te Ao situates the body in a state of flux, set in relation to personal narratives of loss, grief, love, identity, and his own processes of de-colonisation.

When I was very young, my older siblings told me of a spider that lived in the gully of a bend on the Desert Road. A giant spider, "Can you see it?" "Where?! Where?!" "Oh. You missed it."

*For years I strained to see the gully-dwelling giant, leaning so far into the window I thought our van would tip. I never did see it. I still look for the spider, though I know I'll never find it. **

The works in this exhibition share the genealogy of Te Ao's most recent film *Ka mua, ka muri*, particularly their process of compression and expansion. These photographs similarly compress the body between a moving image space and the slow shutter speed and extended filmic exposure. This tangible amalgamation of light and space materially affects the dynamic body.

The resulting photographs document a process of transition or transformation from one state to another. They are richly layered portraits that transcend specific circumstances to speak to wider histories and unfixed meanings. *Mā te wā* – see you later, time will tell.

Shannon Te Ao (Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Ngāti Wairangi, Te Pāpaka-a-Māui) was born in Sydney in 1978. He holds a BFA from University of Auckland's Elam School of Fine Arts and an MFA from the College of Creative Arts at Massey University Wellington. In 2016, Te Ao was awarded the Walters Prize.

Te Ao's recent solo exhibitions include: *Ka mua, ka muri*, Remai Modern, Saskatoon (2020); *Ka mua, ka muri*, Oakville Galleries, Toronto (2020); *my life as a tunnel*, Hopkinson Mossman, Auckland (2018); *my life as a tunnel*, The Dowse Art Museum, Wellington (2018); *With the sun aglow, I have my pensive moods*, The Edinburgh Art Festival, Scotland, and Te Tuhi Centre for the Arts, Auckland (2017); *Tenei ao kawa nei*, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu (2017); *Two shoots that stretch far out*, Taipei Contemporary Art Centre (2017); *Te huka o te tai*, Artspace, Auckland (2017); *Untitled (McCahon House Studies)*, City Gallery Wellington (2017); *Untitled (malady)*, Robert Heald Gallery, Wellington (2016); *A torch and a light (cover)*, Te Tuhi Centre for the Arts, Auckland (2015).

* This text is an excerpt from a conversation between Shannon Te Ao and Matariki Williams on the occasion of Te Ao's solo exhibition *Ka mua, ka muri* at Remai Modern, Saskatoon, 6 August – 3 January 2021. *Ka mua, ka muri* is co-commissioned by Remai Modern and Oakville Galleries, with the support of Creative New Zealand. Organized by Rose Bouthillier, Curator (Exhibitions).

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