

Ngaroma Riley

→ *Mai i te maunga ki te moana*, 2026

Mai i te maunga ki te moana is a sculptural installation comprising two tūrehu—small, light-skinned mountain fairies—and a waka kōpapa (small canoe).

Although tūrehu are common to many iwi across the motu, their origins remain uncertain. As a recurring subject in Riley's work, their presence echoes other aspects of Māori knowledge lost or fragmented through colonisation.

Translating as *From the Mountain to the Sea*, the politically referenced title draws a parallel between the displacement and cultural erasure of Palestinians and the similar experiences of other Indigenous peoples worldwide.

Artwork caption

Ngaroma Riley

Mai i te maunga ki te moana, 2026

macrocarpa, tōtara, tī kouka, harakeke, shell, acrylic paint

commissioned by Te Tuhi, Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland

About the artist

Ngaroma Riley (Te Rarawa, Te Aupōuri) is an artist, curator, and people connector based in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. She's the founder of Te Ana o Hine at Te Tuhi, a wāhine-led carving space born out of the need to create a safe and supportive environment for

wāhine taketake and others who encounter barriers in the carving world, and a co-founder of Shared Lines Collaborative, an arts collective using art to develop resilience.

Ngaroma began her carving journey making Buddhist statues while living and working in Japan. Since returning to Aotearoa in 2020 she has completed a Certificate in Whakairo at Te Wānanga o Aotearoa. In 2022 she built a storehouse for a sculptural installation at Kaitaia and was shortlisted for the 2023 Kingi Tuheitia Portraiture Award. In 2025, Ngaroma won the Molly Morpeth Canaday Major Art Award. She is known for her karetao (hand-carved puppets) and love of chainsaws.