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INSPIRATION AND EXCHANGE:
ARTIST RESIDENCIES IN OCEANIA

Katherine Higgins

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in Art History

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ABSTRACT

Since the late 1960s, artist residencies have had a distinct role in fostering and supporting contemporary visual artists in Oceania. Residencies are a global trend, however those in Oceania are often overlooked outside of the region, and within area studies, they are considered in relation to the artists’ achievements rather than as a strategic method to support the growth of visual arts.

*Inspiration and Exchange: Artist Residencies in Oceania* provides overviews and analyses of eleven residency programmes in five countries within Oceania – Papua New Guinea, Fiji, the Cook Islands, Sāmoa, and Aotearoa New Zealand from 1969 to 2010. While the term ‘residency’ was introduced by Europeans, the meaning has been redefined to suit local needs of sponsors, artists, and communities. I evaluate the adaptation of the term in regards to the development of new programmes and trends, specifically to the format – informal or formal and long-term or short-term – employed by sponsors.

This thesis draws from primary sources, specifically interviews with sponsors, artists, and others involved with residency programmes. The five case studies are evaluated through four distinct yet complementary paradigms – sponsorship, artistic growth and innovation, cultural exchange, and social and economic development. By engaging with and evaluating individual experiences of indigenous artists, the art produced, and wider social and cultural implications of a cross section of residencies, I argue that residencies have provided unique professional development opportunities for visual artists through programme models that complement local conventions. The residencies demonstrate that relatively low-cost programmes can effectively foster artistic growth in a community, generate professional development opportunities, and extend artistic networks beyond the host community to that of the visiting artists’ home communities. This thesis highlights the ways that developing and maintaining residencies in Oceania values and fosters indigenous expertise while encouraging visual artists to seek opportunities within the region. This thesis also contributes to the existing discourse on indigenous residencies.
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This thesis is a work in progress; one that I have been contemplating and working towards since undergraduate art history courses and will continue expanding upon throughout my career. I would like to express my deepest appreciation to all of the teachers, colleagues, and friends that have helped make this project a reality over the years.

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INTRODUCTION

Artist residencies offer time, space, and resources for artistic growth as well as opportunities for local and regional cultural exchange. Residencies aim to provide conditions conducive to creativity to enable artists to devote their full attention to art for a period of time in a new environment and for a specific purpose, whether abroad or in their home community. There is no single definition of artist residencies; the duration, resources, conditions, and requirements of each vary. While it is increasingly common for residencies to expect artists to pay or obtain funding to meet associated fees, many residencies provide artists with an interval of financial sustainability through a variety of funding options including scholarships and grants for travel, provision of materials, and living expenses. Artists are often required to produce a body of work for exhibition. The art works produced vary widely, dependent on the location and requirements of the residency as well as the artists’ practice – some arrive with specific visual intentions while others respond to local social, cultural, political, or environmental conditions. Similar to the way artists respond to local contexts, so too have residency models been adapted in response to the perceived needs of hosts and communities.

This thesis analyses a range of residencies undertaken by indigenous artists in Oceania from 1969 until 2010 to examine how they have supported the growth of contemporary art in the region. Oceania includes the islands in the Pacific Ocean from as far north as the Northern Marianas Islands and Hawai’i to Rapa Nui in the east, Papua New Guinea in the west, and Aotearoa New Zealand in the south ¹(fig. 0.1). Analysis of a cross section of artist residencies within this geographical area investigates how artist residencies are influencing contemporary visual artists in Oceania. The analyses provide a context for overarching questions: why are residencies important to and for artists in Oceania? Are artist residencies suitable means for supporting the growth of contemporary visual arts in Oceania? By applying these relatively straightforward questions to a range of residencies and artists, an understanding of the evolution and relevance of the programmes emerges. Five case studies – Papua New Guinea, Fiji, the Cook Islands, Sāmoa, and New Zealand – are used to contextualise why it is important for artists to develop their practice and art forms through residencies in their home region rather than or in addition to looking elsewhere for support. The thesis will engage with the social and cultural implications of these residencies to demonstrate how the

¹ After this paragraph, I refer to Aotearoa New Zealand as New Zealand in order to work within common and practical conventions.
programmes involve and respond to the host communities. This signals a significant focus in this thesis: the intersection of documenting the practical or methodological elements of residencies and academic speculation about the efficacy and relevance of residencies in Oceania. By considering practical aspects of the residency programmes, this thesis offers a useful point of reference for those interested in or involved with artist residencies in Oceania.

Artist residencies have not been a central focus for research in Pacific/Oceanic arts or area studies. Using primary research, this thesis expands upon brief descriptions of residency programmes to address the influences of residencies on artists’ careers and the role of residencies in building arts infrastructure in Oceania. Internationally, there has been significant focus on artist residencies through academic research and by public and private organisations. Yet, residencies in the Pacific Islands have fallen outside of their purview. Therefore, this thesis adds to the scholarship on residencies by providing accounts of a range of programmes available in Oceania since 1969. In addition to its relevance to Pacific arts and residencies research, this thesis contributes to the discourse of contemporary indigenous arts by analysing examples of residencies specifically designed to support indigenous artists and respond to their perceived needs and presenting the responses and reflections of a number of participating artists.

It was necessary to establish certain parameters for this research and so I have limited the case studies to focus on visual arts in the areas of painting, printmaking, and sculpture. The selection of visual arts residencies in Papua New Guinea, Fiji, the Cook Islands, Sāmoa, and New Zealand was based on the following criteria: when it was established, duration, model of programme, range of participants, availability of documentation, and accessibility to administrators and artists for interviews. By narrowing the range of residencies, I was able to identify key examples that focus on the interrelated as well as divergent aspects of residencies in the region beginning with the first documented programmes in the Pacific Islands in Papua New Guinea in 1969 and extending to ongoing residencies in the Cook Islands and New Zealand. For example, the residencies in Papua New Guinea (1969-1992) served as a model for those in Fiji (1997- present) and Creative New Zealand’s model of residencies in the Cook Islands (2001-2006) was replicated in Sāmoa (2008-present). The Tautai Contemporary Pacific Arts Trust residency (2009-present) in New Zealand is also partially sponsored by Creative New Zealand but follows yet another model. In the case of both Papua New Guinea and the Cook Islands, subsequent residency programmes commenced, which
provides opportunity to evaluate several individual programmes and the ensuing results in one place. These examples were also selected because they fit into a broadly chronological sequence that highlights the related developments amongst programmes in the region.

There have been other residency programmes within these countries and in other parts of Oceania. But, as it was necessary to establish parameters for the practice, it was also important to limit the number of case studies to allow methodical and comprehensive evaluation. I decided to focus on residencies situated in islands without extensive arts infrastructure with one exception: New Zealand. New Zealand is a critical site for residencies and so I include the Tautai Contemporary Pacific Arts Trust residency that invites artists from Pacific Islands to New Zealand so that they can access a range of resources and facilitate exchanges between New Zealand’s vibrant art scene and neighbouring island nations. While New Zealand shares cultural and geographic similarities and relationships with the other islands, the social and political situation and the infrastructure for visual arts there is distinctly different from other countries in the region. The variety of residencies in New Zealand could constitute a thesis in itself, particularly with the range of opportunities sponsored by the national arts development agency, Creative New Zealand, including the Macmillan Brown residency for Pacific artists, and residencies for Māori artists within and outside of New Zealand facilitated by Te Waka Toi, the Māori arts board.² Although my initial research included Te Waka Toi’s reciprocal residencies with Native Americans from Washington and Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians),³ it became apparent that those residencies would have shifted the focus from smaller island groups to the metropolitan centres of the region, like Auckland and Honolulu. Additionally, examples from north western Oceania/Micronesia are not included because of the lack of recurring programmes and insufficient documentation of residencies there. Despite these omissions, ‘Oceania’ is still used as a framework, in the belief that aspects of the programmes described here are feasibly transferable through parts of the region or, in the case of Tautai’s residency in New Zealand, offer relevant opportunities to island-based artists.

The selection of artists for this study was based on similar criteria to those of the programmes, such as: when their residency took place, prior experience for comparison of how it influenced their approach, duration of their residency, and existing

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² Creative New Zealand is governed by the Arts Council and the funding decision-making bodies are the Arts Board, Te Waka Toi, and the Pacific Arts Committee. (Creative New Zealand 2008a)
³ Kanaka Maoli, with the absence of a macron, is the singular form.
documentation or availability for interviews and personal communication. In selecting artists, I was conscious of including emerging and established artists rather than solely concentrating on well-established artists with international profiles. Accordingly, many prominent artists that have held prestigious residencies are not featured. For instance, Cook Islands artist Ani O’Neill has held residencies in New York and Sydney; while those experiences were beneficial for her career and artistic practice, they fall outside of the parameters of this thesis. Not all of the artists that undertook the featured programmes are included in order to provide more in-depth analysis of particular issues in relation to the residency experiences. Another reason for not featuring every artist that has undertaken the selected residencies is that some have hosted more than ten artists while others have only hosted two or three; narrowing the range enabled more detailed evaluation of the artists’ experiences.

The case studies are presented chronologically according to the start of the first residency in each place. The first two case studies in Papua New Guinea and Fiji reveal a type of residency for those with no or little experience and participants were not necessarily travelling. Instead, the residencies functioned locally, similar to ongoing workshops, to hone technical skills and empower aspiring visual artists, and to generate an understanding of contemporary art in the wider community. On the other hand, the type of residency in the Cook Islands and Sāmoa invited established artists to create new work in a different location, while imposing a responsibility to collaborate with local artists and students. A third type of residency, also in the Cook Islands, simply provided artists with the resources and funding to create a new body of work, sponsored by a commercial gallery that profited by retaining commission from the sale of the works created. The New Zealand case study presents a fourth type of residency that afforded emerging artists from Pacific Islands with the “gift of time” in which the artist was provided with a financial award and organisational support to assist with professional development in Auckland. These types of residencies predominantly provided funding through public and private means. Noticeably absent is the type that requires artists to meet residency costs, a style that is increasingly popular amongst international residency programmes. This is not to say that at-cost residencies will not emerge in Oceania; a private residency of this kind in Poutasi, Sāmoa, has been in planning stages since 2008 and is expected to host the first artists in residence mid-2011. The potential of this type of at-cost residency is considered in the conclusion.
In comparing such a range of residencies, the duration of the residency directly influenced the artists involved and the outcomes. In an international context, residencies typically last between several weeks and several months, yet in Oceania there are examples of residencies that continue for years. In order to differentiate significant attributes of residencies, I employ terminology that is specific to this thesis, and define residencies that lasted more than one year as ‘long-term residencies’, although they often do not have a set duration. In other contexts, these residencies might be considered employment or educational training since the long-term examples included in the case studies were based at educational institutions. However, the designation ‘residency’ was important for distinguishing such programmes from academic courses. I define ‘short-term residencies’ as programmes of a fixed period, lasting less than a year. Three months is not necessarily viewed as short when compared to two weeks or one month in other places; however, it is a necessary designation within this thesis to differentiate the unique situation of artists in Oceania that have held continuous residencies for more than a decade. The fundamental difference is that residencies I refer to as short-term have a defined duration and set of expectations from the host and artist; these characteristics are also typical of residencies outside of Oceania, and can be considered conventional when contrasted to the long-term residencies that are unlike most international examples.

Another distinctive feature of many residencies in Oceania is the requirement for artists to conduct workshops with local communities and schools. I highlight aspects of the interplay between workshops and residencies because a number of the examples discussed incorporate characteristics of workshops or require artists in residence to conduct workshops as a component of the programme. Even though each residency was unique because of the individuals involved, these common characteristics help define formats and methodologies.

**Paradigms for evaluation**

The five case studies are examined through four distinct yet complementary paradigms – sponsorship, artistic growth and innovation, cultural exchange, and social and economic development. Within these paradigms, different questions relevant to individual case studies will draw out both successful aspects and the difficulties related to artist residencies in Oceania to generate an understanding of the motivations, expectations, and potential of these programmes. Applying these paradigms to each case study enables a consistent framework for evaluation and provides systematic evidence
that leads to my argument that artist residencies play a vital role in supporting contemporary visual arts in Oceania.

I begin each case study with a brief introduction to the location of the residency prior to providing a thematic analysis through the four paradigms. The paradigm of sponsorship is consistently the first point of analysis because it provides the opportunity to outline the impetus and relationships that drive residencies and the framework for each programme. Deconstructing the politics and policies instituted by key stakeholders establishes the criteria and expectations and reveals how the sponsors structured the residency. The stakeholders may be individuals like Georgina Beier, who invited artists for residencies at her home in Port Moresby, or organisations like Creative New Zealand, which has sponsored residencies in New Zealand, the Cook Islands, Hawai‘i, and Sāmoa as well as outside of Oceania. My analysis of sponsorship covers critical information about the programmes, while also questioning what type of artists the hosts want to attract – which sometimes contradicts those actually invited.

After situating the impetus, logistics, and criteria within the paradigm of sponsorship, the artists in residence are introduced. Relevant biographic information about the participating artists is included as necessary to indicate the experiences and knowledge they bring to these residencies. Then their residency experience is briefly described to indicate how they used the opportunity. This section of each case study provides opportunity to focus on the artist’s experiences and the works produced. Analysis of these experiences provides insight into the functional aspects of residencies and supplies an effective comparison to the impetus and rationale behind the selected programmes. The paradigm of artistic growth and innovation is integrated within the individual artist sections. The individual’s artistic growth, as well as the host community’s ability to adapt and enrich local experiences, offers useful indicators of the success and relevance of artist residencies in Oceania. To pursue this issue, outcomes are presented, discussed, and at times challenged, taking into account art works produced in relation to the residencies when available, or intangible outcomes where there were no product-based requirements.

Cultural exchange manifests during residencies in various ways and between different parties; for example, culture might shape the art produced or the relationships and networks formed. There are examples of disconnections between hosts’ desires to promote cultural exchange and artists’ focus on artistic experience, where exchange may be no more than a by-product. In the Oceania Centre’s residencies for artists in Fiji and
Creative New Zealand’s residencies for New Zealand-based artists in the Cook Islands and Sāmoa, cultural understanding and affirmation were topics for discussion and/or outcomes throughout the residency schemes.

A final paradigm for examination is that of social and economic development because residencies can contribute to the growth of sustainable creative industries in Oceania. Artists’ success is determined not only by their technical skill and innovation but also by the camaraderie and respect reciprocated by local arts practitioners and the community. Success and status also relate to financial achievement that is dictated by the local and tourist market. This paradigm considers the social and economic situations within host communities and in regard to the viability of careers in contemporary arts in Oceania.

These themes cross-fertilise one another and are not discrete. However, applying them systematically to each case study creates a series of analyses and establishes a foundation for comparison, and for raising additional issues, such as who or what drives residencies, the function and challenges of programmes, and the context and implications of residencies within the region.

Chapter breakdown

Inspiration and Exchange: Artist Residencies in Oceania is divided into seven chapters, in addition to the Introduction and Conclusion. Since relevant literature is referred to throughout the thesis, Chapter I is not a standalone literature survey, but key sources such as Epeli Hau‘ofa’s and Albert Wendt’s influential writings about Oceanic identity, particularly in relation to their advocacy for the development of contemporary indigenous arts programmes, are introduced here. In Chapter I: “From workshops to residencies”, I propose that residencies in Oceania have been, in part, a progression from workshops. Descriptions of workshops sponsored by organisations such as UNESCO and private sponsors Nicolai Michoutouchkine and Aloi Pilioko demonstrate characteristics and objectives of programmes that complemented local art production. Through a brief analysis of workshops in 1976, 1986, and 1987, I highlight components of workshops that have been fundamental in a number of residencies.

As previously indicated, the majority of this thesis consists of case studies presented in chronological progression. Chapter II “Artist residencies and the rise of contemporary visual arts in Papua New Guinea” examines artist residencies in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, beginning during the political shift from colonial
administration to self-governance in the late 1960s. The residencies began informally at the home of Georgina and Ulli Beier, and became an integral component of Port Moresby’s arts institutions that incorporated residencies as part of the institutional framework of the Centre for New Guinea Cultures, Creative Arts Centre, and National Arts School.

Chapter II and Chapter III “Adoption and adaptation of an artist residency: The University of South Pacific and the Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture in Fiji” are interrelated because the initial proponents of residencies in Papua New Guinea, Georgina and Ulli Beier, inspired Epeli Hau'ofa’s establishment of residencies at the Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture. In 1997, Epeli Hau'ofa drew from the model of residency programmes he witnessed while working in Port Moresby in the early 1970s to develop residencies at the University of the South Pacific (USP) in Suva, Fiji. Chapter III presents the Oceania Centre’s programme that, unlike conventional residency models, had no specified duration. The majority of programmes in Port Moresby were similar to those at the Oceania Centre in that they were affiliated with academic institutions but did not prescribe a curriculum; rather residencies supported artistic development through a collaborative workshop environment.

The subsequent case studies were more conventional because they were initiatives of organisations, and programmes had specified durations as opposed to the former open-ended residencies. Chapter IV “Homecomings and artist residencies in the Cook Islands” highlights three different residency schemes from 2001 to 2010, making it my largest case study: the Creative New Zealand and Cook Islands Ministry of Cultural Development’s residency for New Zealand-based artists of Pacific heritage (2001-2006), the Bank of the Cook Islands and Cook Islands Ministry of Cultural Development (2002-2003), and Beachcomber Contemporary Art’s residency for local and international artists (2002-present). All three have more conventional formats, with a predetermined duration and specific expectations and requirements for outcomes. This chapter highlights residencies as a significant component of and complement to a surge of contemporary visual arts in Rarotonga, the Cook Islands, while also deconstructing and interpreting the politics of government-funded artistic exchanges. The residencies were held by a range of prominent local and New Zealand-based artists and analysis of their experiences highlights how different formats have contributed to artists and communities in different ways.
Chapter V “Developing contemporary art and art practice through an artist residency in Sāmoa” investigates another residency co-sponsored by Creative New Zealand (2006-present) for New Zealand-based artists of Pacific heritage at the National University of Sāmoa (NUS). Sāmoa’s programme has not prompted additional ones like those in the Cook Islands, but interesting comparisons and analysis can be made because Creative New Zealand essentially relocated the residency from the Cook Islands.

Chapter VI “Furthering the reach: Tautai Contemporary Pacific Arts Trust’s residency in Auckland” examines a residency that invites artists from around the Pacific Islands to New Zealand, a converse exchange from those Creative New Zealand residencies in the Cook Islands and Sāmoa. Tautai’s residency also offers a different perspective because, since 2008, Tautai has offered a residency that does not require art production but provided artists with the gift of time to experience Auckland’s vibrant arts community however they choose.

Chapter VII “Format and function: an overview” examines the case studies in relation to one another, drawing out particular issues for examination within the four overarching paradigms. The overview comparatively evaluates how long- and short-term residency programmes have functioned, while also considering how the programmes’ formats have been employed in response to wide-reaching developments for artists in Oceania.

The Conclusion assesses the overarching implications of residencies in relation to artistic development in the region, and considers how the case studies relate to international programmes. Finally, I propose future directions for artist residencies in Oceania based on the developments and trends outlined throughout the thesis.

**Methodology**

This is an empirical study examining the historical significance and implications of artist residencies for contemporary visual arts in Oceania based on research, on-site experience, and discussion with various individuals involved with the selected programmes. Primary and secondary sources are used to corroborate, support, and, when appropriate, challenge the artists’ recollections and reflections on residencies. Documentation of residencies in Oceania tends to be limited, particularly for residencies prior to active digital recording and publishing via the Internet. Background and supporting literature were sourced from various academic disciplines, predominantly art history, Pacific Islands studies, anthropology, and cultural studies. Aside from books and
articles, Internet-based documentation of residencies provided practical information and reviews about programmes included in this thesis. There has not been a focussed analysis of residencies in Oceania to which I could compare my data, although various scholars have described and referred to residencies in the literature about contemporary Oceanic art. During preparatory research, I studied several international residency programmes to determine points for illustration and comparison to understand how the Oceanic examples fit into the global context. However, because the thesis focus is Oceania, references to international residency programmes are kept to a minimum.

With the exception of Papua New Guinea, I conducted field research at each of the locations of residency programmes as well as Vanuatu, where the Michoutouchkine-Pilioko Foundation artist workshops were held. I personally interviewed the majority of artists, administrative staff, and organisers featured in the case studies at least once. Interviews ranged from a half-hour to numerous hours over the course of a week. Follow-up consisted of emails, phone calls, and visits (with New Zealand-based artists). Every person interviewed was informed about the topic, purpose, process, and reporting of this thesis according to the University of Auckland’s Human Participants Ethics Committee’s criteria. Anonymity was offered and every interviewee was allowed to withdraw his or her contribution for up to a year after the initial interview. 4

In the case of older residencies in Papua New Guinea, it was not possible to contact the artists and there is limited documentation. However, those in Papua New Guinea were some of the first documented residencies in the region and occurred during a surge of Papua New Guinean art production and exhibitions that gained international attention. Therefore, I worked within the limitations and interpreted the available documentation as effectively as possible based on my experience with recent residencies.

Completion reports by artists and organisers from more recent case studies provided additional primary sources. Creative New Zealand required artists to submit a completion report within six weeks of a programme’s end date. I obtained reports from Creative New Zealand with permission of the authors; one artist refused to release the report and several other reports were not available. Those that were available relayed

4 In January 2011, I made an effort to send each artist that I interviewed a draft of sections that included direct quotations from our interviews. Some artists did not provide me with email or contact information on the Ethics Consent Form and so I was unable to contact them. There were some artists for whom I had the correct email addresses but they did not respond. The drafts were sent out to ensure that I had not misrepresented their words, which were provided during interviews. This was not required by the University’s Ethics Committee but it was representative of my desire to be accountable to the artists and to responsibly convey the artist’s words. Moreover, my decision relates to respecting the rights of my research participants and ensuring their control of intellectual and cultural property. I did not undertake to make suggested changes, but assured artists that I would note their objections wherever necessary.
immediate reflections and constructive criticisms. I used the information to prompt the artists’ recollections in interviews that were often conducted years after the residency.

My evaluation of artist residencies in Oceania is distinct from that of solely contemporary visual arts production because I consider the sponsors, artists, and wider community that determine and contribute to the residencies as well as the wide-reaching social and cultural implications. By considering issues related to sponsorship, artistic growth and experience, cultural exchange, and social and economic development, *Inspiration and Exchange: Artist Residencies in Oceania* offers insights in relation to why artist residencies are important to artists and how they can contribute to the growth of contemporary art by supporting artists within local social and cultural contexts. This thesis examines a significant component of Oceanic/Pacific contemporary visual arts to contribute to scholarship on international residencies, highlight the potential of these programmes for supporting indigenous artists, and provide documentation on a range of the programmes that have taken place in Oceania since 1969.
CHAPTER I: FROM WORKSHOP TO RESIDENCY

Introduction

This chapter prefaces the case studies by presenting the hypothesis and supporting evidence that residencies in Oceania were, in part, a progression from workshops. Workshops also continue to be a prominent means of facilitating artistic growth and providing training, independently and as a component of residencies in Oceania. Many of the residencies analysed throughout this thesis retain elements of workshops, as in Papua New Guinea and Fiji that maintained a shared working space or studio. I recognise that long-term residencies such as those in the Papua New Guinea case study were a cross between workshops and art school, yet they were called artist residencies and so I analyse them as such. This chapter provides an opportunity to characterise the typical functions of workshops in Oceania to corroborate the differentiation between workshops and residencies. Although the characteristics typically associated with workshops, such as learning new techniques and communal working space, are apparent in the residencies, it was the duration of programmes that proved a distinguishing factor because workshops typically lasted one to three weeks while residencies lasted months to years. Although the connection between workshops and residencies is not integral to all residencies in Oceania, it is an effective link for this thesis.

To provide context for the development of workshops and residencies, I also briefly introduce writing by Albert Wendt, Epeli Hau‘ofa, and Vilsoni Hereniko about the role of arts in relation to self-determination in post-colonial Oceania and the relationships between art and culture. This link is relevant to the development from workshops to residencies because it signals an increase in attention to and advocacy for governmental support of artists in Oceania. Wendt and Hau‘ofa played significant roles in the development of artist residencies in Fiji; therefore their writing also features prominently in Chapter III. This brief analysis provides background related to the broader advent of residencies in Oceania and also highlights the implications of geographic constraints and terminology relevant to this research.

Influences on workshops and residencies

In the 1970s, scholars such as Albert Wendt and Epeli Hau‘ofa were beginning their careers concurrent with the early workshops and residencies, and their writing
supports community-based programming to develop local art production rather than encouraging or expecting creative individuals to travel abroad for professional development opportunities. Their writing, which, for Wendt was influenced by initiatives he was involved in such as residencies and workshops in the 1970s and in Hau'ofa’s case was published many years after witnessing residency programmes in Papua New Guinea in the 1970s, provides insight into the social, political, and even cultural ideologies that came to shape Pacific studies literature and the development of post-colonial scholarship. For the purpose of this chapter, this scholarship signals the social and political shifts that drove development initiatives for sustainable creative industries, namely art workshops. Several workshops invited artists from around the region to converge at one site to learn techniques, develop professional relationships, and produce art works that they could then share with their home communities. As a result, artists connected with their peers from the region, which correlates with scholarship around the time that advocated for regional affiliation in Oceania to create strong connections amongst island groups.

Samoan poet, novelist, and educator Albert Wendt launched debate around a regional identity in “Towards a New Oceania” (1976). The essay was written while he held teaching and administrative positions at the University of the South Pacific (USP) in Fiji, which was, for him, essentially a return to island Oceania since he lived in New Zealand from the age of fourteen. Wendt’s essay provides a point of reference for this research because he recognised the potential of art as a point for connection throughout Oceania: “intense artistic activity is starting to weave firm links between us. This cultural awakening, inspired and fostered and led by our own people, will not stop at the artificial frontiers drawn by the colonial powers.” (Wendt 1976, 58) Wendt published these ideas soon after he witnessed artistic developments in Papua New Guinea. In 1975, he delivered elements of “Towards a New Oceania” at the Eighth Waigani Seminar in Port Moresby in a presentation entitled “A Sermon on National Development, Education, and the Rot in the South Pacific.” (Whimp 2010, 384) Wendt observed, “A rich and distinctly Papua New Guinea imagery and symbolism, which transcends the hundreds of individual Papua New Guinea cultures, has emerged.” (Wendt 1978, 112) Although he did not specify Papua New Guinean contemporary art in “Towards a New Oceania”, Wendt focused on the development of arts in Oceania and went on to discuss the importance of art in regards to cultural identity: “This artistic renaissance is enriching our

3 Although Fiji is very different from Sāmoa, while he was there he felt a strong “craving to return” and wrote: “I know now that I can’t live too long away from Sāmoa.” (Wendt 1976, 50) He returned to Sāmoa as director of USP’s satellite campus in Apia in 1977.
cultures further, reinforcing our identities/self-respect/and pride, and taking us through a genuine decolonization; it is also acting as a unifying force in our region.” (Wendt 1976, 19) Wendt’s essay focused on an artistic renaissance that, he felt, was moving Pacific people towards a new Oceania. His “new” Oceania was one that in its independence did not “over-glory the past” but moved towards a future where history and culture encouraged people in the region to look within rather than accept foreign techniques and styles. Although Wendt’s provocation was not a reflection of mainstream perceptions at the time or the actual methodology for training in workshops and residencies, his intention aligns with a major theme throughout this thesis: the importance of encouraging visual artists to develop their practice in Oceania to create a sequence of vibrant and self-sufficient arts communities. “Towards a New Oceania” was also a critical essay because Wendt re-established the use of the term ‘Oceania’ as opposed to ‘Pacific’. The word ‘pacific’ denotes passivity and calm, attributes unbefitting of the vast area that requires great resilience from its inhabitants that are frequently faced with the challenges of living on islands with limited resources.

Tongan anthropologist, poet, novelist, and professor Epeli Hau’ofa, a contemporary of Wendt, later instigated further debate around this terminology and also advocated for the use of ‘Oceania’ over ‘Pacific’.7 In 1993, Hau’ofa was teaching sociology at USP in Fiji. He delivered a speech at the Association of Social Anthropologists in Oceania conference at the University of Hawai’i, Hilo, entitled “Our Sea of Islands” that developed a discourse around the use of ‘Oceania’.8 The conference paper was published in *A New Oceania: Rediscovering Our Sea of Islands* (1993) and *The Contemporary Pacific* (1994) and launched a suite of essays that Hau’ofa called “the Oceania project”. (Hau’ofa 2007) The ideas included in the essays were put into practice through the Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture. (Hau’ofa 2008b) In “Our Sea of Islands”, Hau’ofa proposed “the development of a substantial regional identity that is anchored in our common inheritance of a very considerable portion of Earth’s largest body of water: the Pacific Ocean” to counter perceptions of belittlement with a constructive realisation

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6 The term Océanique was coined by cartographers Edme Montelle and Conrad Malte-Brun in 1804 as a more precise label for the part of the world previously grouped under the generic name Terres australes or southern lands. (Douglas and Ballard 2008, 6)

7 This debate has continued with great fervour with discussion of using additional terms based on the word moana that means ocean in many Oceanic languages. ‘Okusitino Māhina advocates the use of moana and Hawaiian scholar B. Pualani Lincoln Maielua makes a compelling call for the replacement of Pacific with Moanaākea a Hawaiian word for Ocean and the name used by numerous Hawaiian newspapers during King Kamehameha’s reign in the nineteenth century. (Maielua 2009, 143)

8 The ideas that emerged had been foreshadowed in earlier writing and conference papers in which he criticised anthropologists and called for more indigenous researchers. (Hau’ofa 2008b)
of the Pacific Islands by presenting them not as tiny and confined dots of land, but as a network of Islands linked by a powerful and fruitful Ocean. (Hau’ofa et al. 1993, 1) He suggested that rather than succumb to prevailing notions of Oceania as small and therefore weak, the people of the region should instead consider the more empowering view of Oceania as strong and brimming with potential. (Hau’ofa et al. 1993, 5) He did not intend to erase important local identities such as Rotuman or Trobriand Islander; rather he sought to supersede the labels applied by foreigners to define the distinct and dynamic people of the Pacific Islands. This is relevant to my discussion of workshops because the sponsors sought to encourage networks amongst artists in the region without defining a specific ‘Pacific’ style. Rather they focused on providing training with techniques and materials that were familiar or accessible throughout the region while encouraging artists’ natural creativity.

Hau’ofa’s utopian view “of Oceania that is new and optimistic” (Hau‘ofa et al. 1993, 1) was part of his vision to move beyond the generalisations of cultural regions and racial types such as those defined by Dumont d’Urville in 1832: Micronesia, Melanesia, and Polynesia. (D’Urville 1832) D’Urville’s terminology is still employed today even though some scholars believe that the racist assumptions of the initial advocate are shared by those that continue to use the old divisions. (D’Arcy 2003) Historian Paul D’Arcy raises the point that “no viable alternative has emerged, and so they continue to be useful general categories for the broad cultural similarities noted across the regions they encompass.” (2003, 218) D’Arcy’s description of the complex cultural patterns and networks that extend throughout the region are helpful to contextualise Hau’ofa’s personal and idealistic essays.

The cultural patterns and divisions of Oceania may make more sense when viewed as a series of overlapping spheres of regional interaction that vacillated between periods of instability and relative stability than when viewed as Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia. The tripartite culture areas are too large to deal with fluid interaction networks. Smaller zones of regular interaction are more suited to examining the relationship between the means and desire for island community interaction and circumstances of island proximity, which were crucial to the formation and evolution of Oceania’s cultures. It is also an approach that can accommodate recent and more longstanding debates within Pacific studies, and answer calls by scholars such as Howe and Hau’ofa for pursuing a regional focus in Pacific history. (D’Arcy 2003, 234)

D’Arcy’s reasoning emphasises the importance of distinguishing the distinct cultures of islands and island groups while also considering the interactions and networks between them. Scholars like Wendt and Hau’ofa moved away from terminology like Micronesia,
Melanesia, and Polynesia to recognise a diversity that should not be divided within three labels or types. This was also, for Wendt, Hau'ofa, and others, an attempt to define and encourage Oceanic epistemologies.

While many scholars embraced the term Oceania, there was also opposition to Hau'ofa’s essentialist treatment of culture and identity. Vanessa Griffen from the History/Politics Department at USP speculated on the feasibility of a “sea of islands”:

This evocation of the ocean, the image of Oceania, does not have the strength to conquer or override Pacific island development on land – social, economic and political which we need to speak more of if we are to really rebut the dominant negative view of the Pacific islands that we as nations live under. (Hau'ofa et al. 1993, 59)

Academic, playwright, and filmmaker Vilsoni Hereniko’s opinion aligns with Griffen’s concerns for development and he posed an alternative view on the issue of land mass in Oceania. Hereniko critiqued Hau'ofa’s vision by explaining that low-lying atolls and small volcanic islands in “the vast Pacific Ocean with its rising sea levels is an apt metaphor for the threat that globalism poses for most of the Pacific Islands.” (V. Hereniko 2001, 167) Hereniko recognised the “advantages in being small, even dependent. Indeed, interdependency has been a feature of the Pacific way from time immemorial.” (V. Hereniko 2001, 167) It is not that he disagreed with Hau'ofa’s efforts to empower Oceania, rather Hereniko suggested that the best protection was to strategise and recognise the region’s strengths, weaknesses, and potential in order to combat the “tidal wave of globalisation.” (V. Hereniko 2001, 168) A significant point of difference between Hereniko’s and Hau'ofa’s ideas is island size, which is indicative of the environment they lived in. Hereniko was raised on Rotuma, a much smaller island than New Guinea or Fiji’s Viti Levu where Hau'ofa spent much of his life. People living on small islands or atolls have a different perception of land versus ocean than those living on large, resource-rich islands. This raises a further key concern because people identify with a country or island, such as Fijian or Rarotongan, Tongan or New Zealand-born Samoan. Few, if any, identify themselves as Oceanian or Pacific Islander.

Hau'ofa recognised that the term ‘Oceania’ was not a solution. During his opening address at the Red Wave Collective exhibition at James Harvey Gallery in Sydney on 27 September 2007, he said: “There is no such thing as the ‘art of Oceania’, ‘Oceania’ does not exist, except as a geographical fiction, and ‘Oceania’ is a term that is not ours. But we [prefer to] use the term ‘Oceania’ instead of ‘the Pacific’ because we are not a tame and peaceful people.” (Cochrane 2005, 447) When I asked why he did not use
indigenous expressions, Hau’ofa explained that while ‘Oceania’ is not an indigenous term, English is the lingua franca and more appropriate than other options: South Seas, South Pacific, Pacific.\(^9\) (Hau’ofa 2008a) Art historian Susan Cochrane noted that Hau’ofa used the terms Oceanic and Pacific interchangeably, while she used Pacific to describe contemporary art because much literature on Oceanic art referred only to the traditional. (Cochrane 2005, 459) Other art historians and anthropologists prefer Oceania/Oceanic. The words Oceanic and Pacific both find their place in this study, yet I prefer Oceania/Oceanic in agreement with Hau’ofa that Pacific denotes an inappropriate passivity. However, it is essential to note that, throughout the thesis, most references are to nationalities and local identities which the artists employ to refer to themselves, such as Cook Islander, Samoan, Solomon Islander, Kanaka Maoli, or Fijian, thus confirming Hau’ofa’s reference to the diverse loyalties that a regional identity could never erase. (Hau’ofa 2008, 42)

Hau’ofa acknowledged some of the concerns about his optimistic vision for a regional identity and clarified that he was not implying a singular culture:

An identity that is grounded in something as vast as the sea should exercise our minds and rekindle in us the spirit that sent our ancestors to explore the oceanic unknown and make it their home, our home. I would like to make it clear at the outset that I am not in any way suggesting cultural homogeneity for our region. Such a thing is neither possible nor desirable. Our diverse loyalties are much too strong for a regional identity to erase them. (Hau’ofa 2008b, 42)

Subramani concurred with Hau’ofa. But in “Reinventing Oceania”, Subramani, an Indo-Fijian professor at USP, observed that the terminology established another point of reference: “A different orientation towards geography and culture is required in order to enlarge the existential space, inscribe a different meaning of space. Thus the decolonizing Pacific Islander inevitably returns to pre-contact Oceania to reimagine the unity and connectedness of things.” (Hau’ofa et al. 1993, 27)

Years later, Subramani argued that reinventing or re-inscribing epistemologies to be reflective of the kaleidoscope of Oceanic cultures would help island scholars unite the important features of diverse and complex forms of knowledge. In “The Oceanic

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\(^9\) The problem of language is a common one in the region where thousands of languages are spoken. One example of Hau’ofa’s use of English is the name of the artist’s collective at the Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture: the Red Wave Collective. It had been suggested that Hau’ofa adopt another name and Hau’ofa responded: “Red Wave is the English for peau kula (Tongan) and biau kula (Fijian). Peau kula is the word for very high tides and for tidal waves. I did not use the Tongan expression, nor the Fijian one because of the national/ethnic identity. Red Wave is regional because English is our lingua franca.” (Hau’ofa 2008a)
Imaginary” (2003), Subramani defined a broad epistemological project, which he maintained “ought to increase Islanders’ artistic and intellectual freedom: through changes in representational strategies, shifts toward multiple discursive, figural, and transgressive practices, and new ways of connecting with larger Oceania that include the Pacific diasporas, island writers ought to produce various forms of counterimaginings to globalism’s utopian quest.” (Subramani 2001, 160) He proposed an approach to encompass the kaleidoscope of Oceanic cultures and confront the “imagined givens” originating from Western intellectual traditions, in order to reorganise knowledge for island scholars to draw authority from Oceanic epistemologies. (Subramani 2001, 151-152) Wendt’s later writing provides examples of the success of such a reinvented epistemology. For example, in “Afterword: Tatauing the Post-colonial Body” (1999), Wendt uses the metaphor of *tatau* (tattoo) to communicate the way that customs, language, and culture coalesce and have been redefined to reflect both pre-contact and contemporary Samoan culture. Wendt’s many volumes of poetry and novels are successful examples of moving towards an Oceania, that he, Hau’ofa, and Subramani envisioned to embrace the space between or *va*, “a space that relates, that holds separate entities and things together… giving meaning to things.” (Wendt 1999, 402) The space also served as a continuum between pre-contact or traditional and post-colonial life in Oceania that has been a critical issue for these scholars. The ideas expressed by Wendt and Hau’ofa are central to the thesis and pertinent to this chapter because of their efforts to foster contemporary Oceanic creativity by encouraging or employing epistemologies. Furthermore, the way that the term ‘residency’ was imported and redefined in response to local circumstances can be considered an example of the indigenous intervention described by these scholars.

**Activation of creativity through workshops**

While he was developing ideas that formed “Towards a New Oceania”, Wendt was the Assistant Director of USP’s Extension Services and he worked with the university and partner organisations to facilitate several workshops. In 1971, UNESCO and partner organisations USP and South Pacific Commission (currently known as Secretariat of the Pacific Community) had initiated the Project for the Study of Oceanic

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10 Subramani notes that he began developing these ideas in 1977 after the South Pacific Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies conference at University of Queensland. “The Oceanic Imaginary” was the keynote address at the Eighth Conference of the South Pacific Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies at USP in 1999.
Cultures. The aims and purpose of the project were “to promote the interest of the Oceanic people in their cultural heritage and to inculcate positive awareness of cultural identity.” (UNESCO 1977, 5) The ambitious aims of the project reflected contemporaneous movements towards decolonisation, yet were seemingly at odds with the principle of self-determination because of the external organisation’s role in establishing directives around cultural identity in Oceania.

The arts component of the project employed workshops that brought together creative individuals from countries across the region to learn new skills. From the outset, art workshops were recommended “to provide a vehicle for cross-cultural and cross-island awareness and exchange of ideas. It was also hoped that in a wider, more personal sense, such workshops would provoke new ideas and stimulate new approaches among individual artists and teachers.” (Report on the Tonga Regional Visual Arts Workshop 1976 hereafter Report on Tonga RVAW 1978, 31) Upon their return home, workshop participants were expected to act as catalysts to motivate other artists and craftsmen in the fine arts. (Report on Tonga RVAW 1978, 3)

One of the visual arts workshops that characterises the priorities of the project was the Tonga Regional Visual Arts Workshop held in Nuku‘alofa in 1976. The three-week workshop was jointly funded by UNESCO, the Australian Government, and the South Pacific Commission, and directed by USP’s Extension Services. Māori artists and educators, Katarina Mataira and Para Matchitt, facilitated the workshop for sixteen participants from USP’s member countries.11 Mataira had previously conducted workshops for USP in the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Sāmoa in 1975, so she was familiar with the needs, working situations, and logistical limitations for the participants living in islands without infrastructure or resources for contemporary artists.

The workshop’s objectives were:

to identify and analyse the prevailing situation with regard to the arts of Oceania;
to stimulate an awareness of the needs of each island group and to identify both the problems and means of motivation associated with the expression and fulfilment of those needs; to develop a greater consciousness for personal integrity in the arts, and for greater exploration with both local and imported materials in the visual arts. The participants were: to identify, analyse and discuss issues related to the above; to explore the possibilities of new media and ideas and produce contemporary works arising out of the study; to produce a large work incorporating selected styles, techniques, and materials (this to be a joint

11 USP’s member countries are the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.
project); to mount an exhibition of completed works. (Report on Tonga RVAW 1978, 9)

The objectives indicated a desire for more than just skills training. An expectation that the workshop would gauge the arts climate across the region and determine ways to support the region’s artists was ambitious. However, unlike workshops or even residencies that primarily function for the host community, the prospect of bringing representatives from many of Oceania’s island nations meant that the workshop was a practical means of identifying strengths and weaknesses of expressive arts in the region while simultaneously facilitating wide-reaching networking amongst participants, although restricted by the limited number of participants representing each island group.

By hosting the workshop in Tonga rather than Australia or New Zealand, the sponsors demonstrated their confidence in the viability of artistic production in island environments. These objectives highlight the development strategies that propelled residencies described in this thesis.

The fifteen workshop participants12 learned new techniques that relied on a combination of local and easily imported materials, such as using chipboard for printing and applying acrylic paint to decorate tapa (barkcloth). These techniques, incorporating customary practice and imported and introduced materials, prompted discussion of issues of the preservation and revival of traditional arts and crafts. The workshop was geared towards experimentation and participants embraced the freedom of expression that it offered and experimented with new techniques and moving away from reproducing customary imagery towards unique individual ideas (fig. 1.1).13 Pitasoni Tanaki from Niue reported, “I appreciated very much the idea of learning to be your true self in art and not just reproducing or copying from existing art pieces. This course really offered some very valuable ideas and thoughts which I have to take back with me to my country.” (Report on Tonga RVAW 1978, 22)

The challenge of contemporary art practice in prohibitive economic situations was also discussed as participants considered the viability of contemporary art careers in Oceania. Discussions led to broader issues regarding support of indigenous arts, and the

12 The participants: Teremoana Pearson, tapa, Cook Islands; Mereisi Tabualevu, teacher, Suva, Fiji; Adama Vakarorogo, adult education, Taveuni, Fiji; Nakibae Merand, woodworking teacher, Kiribati; Albert Leomala, teacher and poet, Vanuatu; Pitasoni Tanaki, woodwork/handicrafts, Niue; Nelson Boso, USP student, Solomon Islands; Fa‘one Hefa, art teacher, Tonga; Semisti Siu, retired arts teacher/independent artist, Tonga; Mele Sinisia Taumoepeau, tapa, Tonga; Takitoa Taumoepeau, student, Tonga; Henele Vaka, Tonga Audio Visual Aid Centre, Tonga; Vione Natano, teacher, Tuvalu; Iosua Toafa, art teacher/artist/writer, Sāmoa; Saivaega Vasa, art teacher, Sāmoa.

13 The workshop publication did not attribute the artists’ names or titles of any of the art works included in the report.
responsibility of the government to provide financial support for arts development. (Report on Tonga RVAW 1978, 17) Although there was not adequate time to advance towards solutions, the participants realised that, while they seemed to work in isolation, their predicaments were similar. Encouraging discussion of such issues seems to have fostered a sense of camaraderie amongst the participants, and facilitated valuable debate about arts development and the challenges of being an artist in Oceania. (Report on Tonga RVAW 1978, 17-20) After three weeks of the tutors’ guidance in the use of materials and techniques, many participants told organisers that they were leaving with new confidence, an appreciation of new media, the capacity to communicate their ideas in a variety of media, and a renewed admiration of traditional materials and crafts. (Report on Tonga RVAW 1978, 22) Mereisi Tabualevu from Fiji said,

The three week workshop itself as it was organised, and work done in it, was successful. It has provoked new ideas and has stimulated various new approaches amongst individual participants from the different localities. I am sure every artist would be eager to return to their respective homes and encourage and stimulate their own people who have talents in these areas. The guidance and encouragement from our two tutors will be our springboards, to our various directions to use our local material. The public has been impressed with our display and this is a result of success. (Report on Tonga RVAW 1978, 23)

Tabualevu’s comments signal the success of the workshop’s organisers and tutors encouraging participants to return to their counties and motivate other artists towards greater exploration of visual arts using both local and imported materials. It is difficult to evaluate the actual achievement since there are no records of follow-up or additional workshops related to the Project for the Study of Oceanic Cultures. I do not doubt Tabualevu’s assessment, but I realise that, despite participants’ enthusiasm after three weeks of focused art making, they may not have been able to maintain that fervour when they returned to independent practice.

The following year, the Second Session of the Advisory Committee for the Study of Oceanic Cultures took place in Port Moresby. Albert Wendt and Ulli Beier both recommended the continuation and further development of art workshops on both regional and national levels. (UNESCO 1977) At the time, Wendt taught in the Literature Department and held an administrative position with extension services at USP. Ulli Beier, a German writer and educator teaching at the University of Papua New Guinea, who is described in more depth in Chapter II, suggested that to “continue promoting the expressive arts and art education apart from workshops, the Advisory Committee should now initiate training fellowships and grants, an artists-in-residence programme, the
exchange of artists and performers and arts and crafts exhibitions, within and outside Oceania.” (UNESCO 1977, Annex VI, 7-8) Beier’s suggestion was based on the success of artist residencies in Papua New Guinea initiated by his wife Georgina Beier with his support. However, there is no evidence that UNESCO initiated any residencies or exchanges based on his observations.

A separate example of workshops that demonstrate a public-private partnership as well as an effort at continuity were held in 1984 and 1985 at the Michoutouchkine-Pilioko Foundation in Esnaar, Vanuatu, for artists from Fiji, Tonga, the Cook Islands, Sāmoa, Solomon Islands, New Caledonia, Wallis Island, Kiribati and Vanuatu. While the three-week workshops did not become an annual event, Nicolai Michoutouchkine and Aloi Pilioko conducted workshops elsewhere, such as Fiji in 1994 and the Cook Islands in 1996. (Crowl 1997; Papatua 1996)

Wassilian Aloi Pilioko and Franco-Russian Nicolai Michoutouchkine met in 1959 when Pilioko moved to Nouméa where Michoutouchkine had recently opened a gallery to exhibit his personal collection of Oceanic art alongside art work of indigenous and expatriate artists. (Teissier-Landgraf and Michoutouchkine 1995) Pilioko described the day they met, “One day, the painter, Nicolai Michoutouchkine, invited me in and I became a regular visitor to the gallery. My life was to change completely. From then on I devoted myself to art.” (Pilioko 1980, 4) Pilioko and Michoutouchkine travelled extensively throughout the Pacific region making art, working, and hosting exhibitions of work by themselves and with other artists they met along the way. Their travels led to various opportunities to work with other artists in the region. In 1963, Pilioko was invited by the Solomon Islands Department of Education to conduct workshops to inspire young Solomon artists. (Pilioko 1980, 17) Nearly a decade later, after attending the first Festival of Pacific Arts in Fiji in 1972, Pilioko was invited to be artist in residence at USP, further described in Chapter III. Pilioko’s and Michoutouchkine’s involvement with visual arts on local and regional levels led them to establish the Michoutouchkine-Pilioko Foundation in 1977, to foster an awareness of traditional arts amongst Pacific artists and preserve traditional objects in the Pacific region. (Howarth 2010) By 1984, the foundation had established a reputation for fostering artistic creativity and innovation amongst locals and tourists alike, so it was a fitting site for two artists’ workshops in 1984 and 1985. (P. Hereniko 1986, 81) Thirty-four artists from nine

14 Michoutouchkine was born in France to Russian parents.
15 The participants were Sau Ueligitone from American Samoa; Teararoa Ariki, Nga Teariki from the Cook Islands; Setareki Bogidrau, Timoci Dautei, S. Poy Fong, Uday Singh from Fiji; Timau Tira from Kiribati;
countries within Oceania were provided with funding from the South Pacific Creative Arts Society and the Institute of Pacific Studies of USP to attend the workshops. For three weeks, artists stayed at the Michoutouchkine-Pilioko Foundation in Esnaar as seen in Eddie Daeding Bibimauri’s drawing (fig. 1.2). Patricia Hereniko documented the workshops in *Pacific Artists* (1986), and described Michoutouchkine’s method of facilitating artistic exchange:

Michoutouchkine attempted to set a particular tone in discussion on the Workshop in general, that of the young artists deciding for themselves what they would attempt and which methods they would use… Michoutouchkine’s own views both of the artist’s responsibility to society and of his personal responsibility to renew himself were to strongly influence the individual artists in the days ahead. (P. Hereniko 1986, 82)

Michoutouchkine asserted his opinion that artists make an important contribution to society and that taking the responsibility to experiment, innovate or renew would further artists’ careers. Michoutouchkine’s lofty aspirations were based on his personal experience of his partner’s successful career that was driven by passion for art as well as Pacific cultures. He did not dictate techniques or styles. Interestingly, this is similar to the methods of Georgina Beier in Papua New Guinea and Epeli Hau'ofa in Fiji. Beier and Hau'ofa encouraged artists in residence to experiment with personal expression, although they did influence artists’ techniques and styles. Michoutouchkine, Beier, and Hau'ofa, each in their own way, were encouraging artists to engage with and invest in their communities by considering their social responsibilities and/or confronting social or political issues. Such commitment helped build a supportive network of visual artists in Oceania.

During the workshops, Michoutouchkine’s role was that of facilitation while Pilioko focused on hands-on interaction with workshop participants during the daily activities, including printing, painting, clothing design and production, interior design, and jewellery-making, as well as local food preparation, *kastom*16 healing, and Ambrym17 carving (fig. 1.3). Patricia Hereniko wrote: “The emphasis throughout was upon ‘living’ shared art, and artists were consequently discouraged from segregating themselves, or

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16 *Kastom* is the Bislama word referring to traditional.
17 Ambrym is an island in Vanuatu.
simply recreating images from their own homes and histories, or even giving expression
in an insular way to their own imaginations.” (P. Hereniko 1986, 82) This was part of
Michoutouchkine’s advocacy for artists to invest in their communities.

Michoutouchkine and Pilioko had proven that practising contemporary visual
arts in Oceania was not an economically futile endeavour: their commercial success and
reinvestment into the development of contemporary visual arts, through the
Michoutouchkine-Pilioko Foundation, demonstrated to the participants that their
creative talents should be celebrated as a gift to share amongst their home community
and the network of artists united through the workshops. Artists tackled new themes,
media, and concepts such as incorporating aspects of ni-Vanuatu life into their practice
while also acknowledging and sharing their own cultural heritage. (P. Hereniko 1986, 82)
Accounts from the workshop participants in 1984 and 1985 indicate that they were
successful for training and networking. One example of the motivation that the
workshops instilled is evident in Cook Islander Nga Teariki’s experience. He reported
that his aim was to encourage peers at home to exhibit their art and expose them to new
forms. (P. Hereniko 1986, 52) For several years before the 1984 workshop, he wanted to
start an art gallery and, when he returned to the 1985 workshop, he had quit his
government job to establish an art gallery in Rarotonga. (P. Hereniko 1986, 92)

A difference between the Tonga and Michoutouchkine-Pilioko workshops was
that the participants of the former were primarily teachers, while many of those in the
latter were fulltime artists working independently, the increased number perhaps
reflecting an outcome of the earlier workshop after eight years. Finally, a major advantage
for those hosted by Michoutouchkine and Pilioko was that there were successive
workshops, facilitating critical follow-up with participants that then continued at events
like the Festival of Pacific Arts and individual workshops sponsored by USP and
conducted by Michoutouchkine and Pilioko at various satellite campuses.

The examples from Tonga and Vanuatu demonstrate some of the ways that
workshops have served different purposes. They became a means of dispersing artistic
techniques that were often not available locally. While several art schools exist today, in
the 1970s and 1980s there were few, and many of the Pacific Islands still do not have art
schools. Therefore, for artists like the majority of those that participated in the
workshops described above, the workshops were an opportunity to receive critical
instruction and training to develop their art. The case studies illustrate how residencies
have helped to bridge that gap by offering more consistent opportunities, at least in the case of Papua New Guinea and Fiji.

Chapter Summary

Workshops paved the way for many recent residency programmes and created expectations of community involvement, collaboration, and cultural engagement, which continue to supplement residency programmes. Artist residencies were not introduced to Oceania to imitate European or North American versions of residency programmes, even if the programmes maintained similarities to European models. Rather, the first residencies in Oceania replicated a workshop model of artist training and creative exchange: this is particularly evident in the Papua New Guinea and Fiji case studies. The workshop format was retained for long-term residencies to promote artistic growth and innovation through exchange, and instituted as an alternative to academic programmes. They can be viewed as long-term art workshops but the facilitators and directors were termed artist residencies by the sponsors. Residencies have not eliminated the need for workshops; art workshops have been and continue to be a popular and effective tool for providing short-term training to creative individuals across Oceania. For example, UNESCO sponsored a workshop, “Empowering Pacific Artists” in Vanuatu in 2001 for eighteen artists representing twelve countries.18 (Loiseau 2004) Workshops have also been integrated into residency programmes; artists in residence may be required to conduct training courses for students or local artists.

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18 The workshop was directed by New Zealander Chris Delany. Five of the ni-Vanuatu participants went on to become trainers at the Art Department of the Institute of National Technology, which reopened in association with UNESCO’s workshop.
CHAPTER II: ARTIST RESIDENCIES AND THE RISE OF CONTEMPORARY VISUAL ART IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Introduction

In 1969 in Port Moresby, the capital of Papua New Guinea, informal artist residencies began in the home of expatriates Georgina and Ulli Beier, an artist and a writer/educator respectively. Those residencies spurred others that continued through the 1970s at newly established arts institutions in Port Moresby. In these artist residencies, creative individuals from across Papua New Guinea found a place to express themselves that was not bound by local cultural conventions, such as those in their home villages. Instead, Papua New Guinean artists were guided by expatriate artists and educators to develop modern artistic practices in a manner that complemented, celebrated, and critiqued the customary and contemporary lifestyles around them. This chapter demonstrates how ‘artist residency’ was a term interpreted to suit those involved and did not have the same meaning it does today. It also reveals how that terminology was strategic in fostering status for contemporary visual artists.

Because of the early date of initiatives in Papua New Guinea, information about the artists’ experiences could not be obtained first hand. I have worked from secondary sources that are limited because, in the period I am focusing on, contemporary art was still a recent occurrence that was not documented as thoroughly as later programmes. My information is derived from publications by or referencing the initial instigators of artist residencies in Papua New Guinea, Georgina Beier and Tom Craig, who were focused on promoting and describing artists more than residency programmes. Beier sponsored artists in residence at her home studio as a personal endeavour while she and her husband lived in Port Moresby for his job at the University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG) from 1967 until 1971, and then upon their return in 1974 until 1978 when she was involved with the Creative Arts Centre and established a gallery, Gambamuno. (G. Beier and Tröger 2001, 30) Her endeavours were influenced by experiences in Nigeria where she and her husband were involved with initiatives to support Nigerian visual artists, writers, and dramatists. Tom Craig moved to Papua New Guinea from Glasgow in 1964 to teach at a secondary school art in Kwikila. He became Director of the Expressive Arts Department at Goroka Teachers College (1968-1972) and then Director of the Creative Arts Centre (1972-1976) and National Art School (1976-1983) in Port Moresby. Artist residencies were employed by those art institutions to provide an
alternative to academic avenues because many Papua New Guineans did not have access to formal education, which was a precursor or prerequisite for university enrolment. In the mid-1970s a desire for academic credentials prevailed and aspiring artists enrolled in tertiary institutions as students while their predecessors remained artists in residence or worked independently. The total number of artists participating in residencies with Beier, at the Centre for New Guinea Cultures, Creative Arts School, and National Arts School is unclear because documentation of the programmes was inconsistent.

In addition to publications by Georgina and Ulli Beier and Craig, anthropologist Pamela Rosi’s dissertation “Bung Wantaim: The Role of the National Arts School in Creating National Culture and Identity in Papua New Guinea” (1994) provided valuable information about artists working at the Creative Arts Centre and National Arts School where she conducted fieldwork beginning in 1986. Rosi’s focus was the function of the National Arts School that was formed after the preceding institutions, which had used residencies as a primary means of training artists. While her dissertation did not focus on the residency programmes or artists that did not enrol in degree programmes, I have been able to use information from Rosi’s research to support the limited data available from those who were personally involved with the residencies. As observed by art historian Susan Cochrane, who has also documented the developments of contemporary art in Papua New Guinea, “apart from [scant leaflets] and the several articles by Ulli and Georgina Beier, there is virtually no documentation on the early years of the contemporary art movement.” (Cochrane and Mel 1997, 49) As another strategy, I also interviewed Papua New Guinean artists visiting Auckland in 2009 and 2010 and corresponded with others to garner their opinions on the sources I rely upon.

Despite the challenge of working from a limited selection of secondary sources, I felt that it was essential to this evaluation of artist residencies in Oceania to consider the residencies in Papua New Guinea because they were some of the first in the region and coincided with a surge of contemporary visual arts in Port Moresby. Furthermore, they were used as a model for those in Fiji and offer a distinctly different style from those sponsored and administered by organisations such as Creative New Zealand since 2001.

I present the experiences of five artists in Port Moresby from 1969 through the 1970s to investigate the evolution of residency programmes there and how those programmes fostered contemporary visual artists. The range of artists were selected as representative of the progression of the early residencies in Port Moresby because their

19 “Bung Wantaim” is a phrase used by Martin Morububuna beginning in the 1970s to describe his style of pan-Papua New Guinean art. Rosi translates the phrase as national community. (Rosi 1994, i)
experiences demonstrate challenges that early contemporary artists faced, and the significance of residencies in sustaining careers. Moreover, these five artists’ experiences were referenced more than others by Ulli and Georgina Beier and Craig, which provided more background information in relation to the personal history and career development. There are four overlapping residency schemes – independent residencies at Beier’s home and institutionally affiliated programmes at the Centre for New Guinea Studies, Creative Arts Centre, and National Arts School – that the artists participated in during that time, which sequentially transitioned from one to another. Only one of the five artists in this case study enrolled in a degree programme. This was also a decisive factor in the selection because these artists relied on residencies rather than formal training courses to develop their skills and techniques, which is a point of comparison with residencies at the Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture.

Timothy Akis, Mathias Kauage, and Marie Taita Aihi were the first three artists to undertake residencies with Georgina Beier in 1969, and Akis went on to hold annual residencies with Tom Craig at the Creative Art Centre and National Arts School until 1976. Jakupa Ako (known as Jakupa) was mentored by Craig in Goroka from 1969-1970 before becoming an artist in residence at the Creative Art Centre and National Art School from 1974 until 1990. The fifth artist, Martin Morububuna, joined the Creative Arts Centre as an artist in residence in 1974, eventually enrolled in diploma courses, and also held residencies at the National Museum of Papua New Guinea (1992) and de Young Museum in San Francisco, California (2009). In an effort to acknowledge recent residency opportunities for Papua New Guinean artists and acknowledge the continuity of a strong contemporary visual art movement, as well as the commitment of international institutions to support the artists, I include a brief review of residencies at the de Young Museum from 2006 to 2009 in Appendix A, which complements this case study. Although these artists do not represent the full scope of contemporary artists that came to prominence in the 1970s or all of the artists that held residencies, the five selected illustrate the different directions artists took: some found commercial success through residencies, while the changing lifestyle in the capital drove others to return to their home villages.

In this chapter, Beier’s and Craig’s initiatives are introduced and examined through the paradigm of sponsorship after a brief introduction to useful geographic and demographic information about Papua New Guinea. Then the artists’ background and residency experiences lead up to evaluation of the residencies through the paradigms of
cultural exchange and social and economic development. In this context, cultural exchange and development in the post-colonial sense overlap because, at the time of independence, a national Papua New Guinean identity developed, which celebrated cultural diversity throughout the country. Social issues arise in response to the cultural exchange that occurred when different artists incorporated distinct local references into art works that became representative of a national Papua New Guinean identity. This chapter highlights how residencies were integral to the development of contemporary visual arts in Papua New Guinea. Through the residencies, artists produced innovative art works that were adopted as visual symbols of an emergent national identity.

Setting the scene

Papua New Guinea’s size of 473,180 sq km land mass with 600 outlying islands makes it the largest country in Oceania and the largest presented in this research (fig. 2.1). Papua New Guinea’s population exceeds 6.7 million\(^{20}\) and the indigenous peoples speak more than 800 different languages. To contextualise the commencement of artist residencies in Papua New Guinea in the late 1960s, it is essential to introduce the political situation, which directly influenced them. In 1906, Australia inherited colonial administration and financing of Papua New Guinea\(^{21}\) from Britain. (Crocombe 2001, 419) Due to international pressures, particularly by the United Nations, colonial powers worldwide began accepting the idea of self-governance for their colonies in the 1950s and 1960s, and independence became a goal for many colonial territories in the region. By 1973, Papua New Guinea was self-governing and in 1975 the country became independent. However, as is the case with other post-colonial territories, Papua New Guinea was not to return to the pre-colonial state of more than 1,000 autonomous tribes. (Crocombe 2001, 438) Rather, a constitutional system was formed as a result of several years of public consultations. This system was intended to reflect the needs of the indigenous people while adopting the parliamentary system of the former colonial government. (Crocombe 2001, 438-39) During the transition to independence, Australia continued to influence political and educational systems in Papua New Guinea by contracting education, policy, and development specialists to work with local professionals; Tom Craig and Ulli Beier are examples of this.

\(^{20}\) The World Bank reported Papua New Guinea’s population as 6,732,159 in 2009. (The World Bank. 2009)

\(^{21}\) Papua New Guinea is the country on the east side of the main island while West Papua was colonised by the Netherlands until 1963 when Indonesia incorporated the territory. (Crocombe 2001, 427)
Georgina Beier’s early impressions of Port Moresby reveal her perception of a lack of infrastructure or opportunities for contemporary Papua New Guinean artists. (G. Beier 1974; G. Beier and Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies 1974; U. Beier 2005) She wrote: “Port Moresby has no art galleries, but every year the Sunday painters have a huge show and competition at the YWCA. Most of the work presented is atrocious, some is slick and competent but all is lacking in originality.” (G. Beier 1974, 1) Beier’s assessment can, however, be challenged. An Australia-born artist who grew up in Papua New Guinea and was practising in Port Moresby when the Beiers arrived remarked that there was a strong art scene that extended beyond the capital and included both indigenous and expatriate artists. (Artist working in Papua New Guinea 2011) Papua New Guineans and expatriate visual artists worked in different parts of the country, particularly creating paintings and sculpture inspired by customs, traditions, and legends. (Artist working in Papua New Guinea 2011)

In “The Artist and the Reefs Breaking Open” (1978), Albert Wendt noted that the art emerging from Papua New Guinea in the late 1960s was associated with the rapid rise of nationalism; the opening of institutions like UPNG, the Expressive Arts Department at Goroka Teachers College; and the work of Ulli and Georgina Beier and Tom Craig at those institutions. Established in 1967, UPNG was based on Australia’s university system; the curriculum included creative writing but not visual arts. (Cochrane 2007, 141) Beginning in the early 1970s, the Papua New Guinea government financed arts curricula from the primary school level through to tertiary level, which along with other programmes, like residencies, contributed to the development of infrastructure for the arts. (H. Stevenson 1995, 49) Wendt credited the rise of political leaders such as Michael Somare and Maori Kiki for fostering “a rich and distinctly Papua New Guinea imagery and symbolism, which transcends the hundreds of individual Papua New Guinea cultures.” (Wendt 1978, 111-112) Funding for arts development came from AU$5 million provided by the Australian government over five years in the lead-up to independence. (B. Craig 1996) This was used to establish the National Cultural Council and associated institutions including the Creative Arts Centre, the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies, the National Theatre Company, and the National Museum and Art Gallery in 1974. (Kingsley 2002, 78)

22 This artist requested to remain anonymous. In respect for the participant’s wishes and in accordance with ethical research practice, I have protected the artist’s identity.
23 For example, Papua New Guinean Robert Biai and expatriates Gleny Kohnke and Kurt Pfund.
**Sponsorship**

**Georgina and Ulli Beier**

The establishment of UPNG brought Georgina and Ulli Beier to Port Moresby. In 1967, Ulli Beier was hired by the university officials to develop literature courses with a focus on creative writing because of his success teaching, editing, and publishing African creative writing in Nigeria from 1950 until 1966, which they determined was relevant and applicable to independent Papua New Guinea. Georgina and Ulli Beier also collaborated with artists in Ibadan, Nigeria. Their work with writers and artists in Nigeria shaped initiatives in Papua New Guinea even though the social, cultural, and environmental situation in Nigeria is unlike that in Papua New Guinea. The political situation, however, was similar to some extent because both countries were embarking on post-colonial nation building. It appears that Georgina and Ulli Beier felt that their experience in Nigeria was applicable in Papua New Guinea and that it influenced their work there; therefore, I preface analysis of sponsorship with a review of the Beiers’ earlier experiences.

Born in Germany, Ulli Beier studied Phonetics at the University of London (1947-1950) where he responded to an advertisement to teach at the University of Ibadan that launched a lifelong interest in African writing and arts. (Ogundele 1998, 62) By 1961, he had established the literary journal *Black Orpheus* and co-founded the Mbari Club (later known as Mbari Mbayo Club) in Oshogbo for playwrights, actors, musicians, and artists. Establishment of the Mbari Club was motivated by the potential of African creativity that the founders felt was fettered by the social conditions imposed through the demise of traditional society under colonial rule. (Kasfir 1999, 50) In 1963, Ulli Beier met Georgina Betts, a primarily self-trained artist born in London and living in Nigeria, developing her own artistic practice and working with local contemporary artists. Upon moving to Oshogbo with Ulli, she immediately became involved with Mbari Mbayo Club because it was the centre of contemporary cultural life. (G. Beier and Tröger 2001, 15)

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24 Although Ulli Beier left Nigeria for Port Moresby in 1966, he did not lose contact with the writers and artists he and Georgina worked with in Nigeria. He went on to write and publish many books and articles about and by Nigerian writers and artists, such as Twins Seven Seven, Yemi Elebuibon, Duro Ladipo, and Kola Ogunnola. (U. Beier 1968, 1991, 1999)
25 Ulli Beier founded the Mbari Club with Austrian Susanne Wegner.
26 According to the Nigerian writer and academic Wole Ogundele, Beier was famous for work with *Black Orpheus* and the Mbari club as well as starting the Oshogbo Art Movement, work with the famous Yoruba theatre dramatist Duro Ladipo, and translating and publishing Yoruba oral poetry and the first anthology of modern African poetry in English. (Ogundele 1998, 64)
27 Georgina Beier attended art school for two years but did not complete a degree programme.
She conducted workshops and worked in a shared studio with Mbardi Mbayo artists. The workshops demonstrated techniques and developed skills but, its philosophy, Kasfir noted, “was to release creative energies that were thought to lie deep within these individuals.” (Kasfir 1999, 50) Georgina Beier described the workshop experience in Oshogbo,

> Ideas grew in different directions at breakneck speed. When the five euphoric days were over, several very distinct artistic personalities had emerged… We had all grown so close together during this common experience that it seemed natural for us to continue working together. I set up studios in our house and in the museum of the Ataaja’s palace, and until we left Nigeria for New Guinea in December 1966, we saw each other every day and discussed our work. (G. Beier and Tröger 2001, 122-123)

Beier’s close working relationships with Nigerian artists as well as her manner of evolving workshops into a shared studio foreshadows the way artist residencies developed in her home in Papua New Guinea.

Jimoh Buriamoh, a participant in a 1964 Oshogbo art workshop with Beier, described her methods:

> The system of instruction adopted by Georgina was to make us more independent right from the beginning. We were neither shown any paper nor told what to do. Rather, we were asked to express what was in our minds… Georgina helped us to understand that we must each discover an individual style in order to make our art authentic. She instilled in us that notion that every one of us must search for his individuality. (Buriamoh in Agozino 2009)

Buriamoh’s recollection of Beier’s methods indicates that she related ‘authenticity’ to individuality, most likely a sign of her experience as a largely self-taught artist. Nevertheless, she acted as facilitator by providing resources and critique. Some of the Oshogbo artists remarked that Georgina and Ulli Beier took the endeavours and visions of artists seriously, which enabled artists to take themselves seriously as professionals and provided opportunities for further development. Both Buriamoh and Twins Seven Seven, another Oshogbo artist, claimed that they were not instructed or taught but encouraged to experiment and develop individual styles, pursue their ideas and vision, and establish criteria to critique their work in a way that was relevant to them, not a critique based on European aesthetics. (U. Beier 1991, 1999) Twins Seven Seven praised Georgina and Ulli Beier’s methods of fostering creative individuals:

> The uniqueness of it was, that they came from another culture, and they made us more aware of our own culture. They revealed our creativity to the world and to ourselves. That’s what I see in them. They were kind of missionaries, but they were not like those Christian missionaries who came with the Bible in one hand
and with the sword in the other. They came with brushes in one hand and a bag of knowledge in the other. (Peter Trist in U. Beier 1991, xiv)

This statement by Twins Seven Seven raises the important issue of expatriates influencing the formation of the contemporary visual arts movements, in both Nigeria and Papua New Guinea, which became associated with post-colonial national identity. It seems inherently problematic that Europeans, rather than local indigenous proponents, stimulated the art and writing representative of independence. As foreigners, the Beiers were not restricted by local customs, which led them to encourage new forms of creative expression. Additionally, they were fuelled with confidence from successful projects in Nigeria. These factors influenced their vision of what post-colonial Papua New Guinean identity should be, which included contemporary artists depicting that identity. However, a significant difference between Georgina Beier’s roles in each place was that in Nigeria she joined the already existing Mbari artists but in Papua New Guinea she sought untrained artists to mentor in a private setting. In Port Moresby, she worked individually with artists over long periods of time, whereas she facilitated one or two-week workshops in Oshogbo. This led to different outcomes that are detailed below; for example, longer residencies that enabled artists to learn new techniques at a pace determined by the individual and Beier. Workshops had specific objectives, such as printmaking techniques, whereas Beier used the residency format to introduce a range of modern materials and techniques.

Beier formed an exclusive group of artists, and it has been suggested by an artist working in Port Moresby at the time that she influenced the artists’ work in ways that prohibited a natural evolution of contemporary Papua New Guinean art because her process was based on her African experience. (Artist working in Papua New Guinea 2011) Beier’s process of promoting artistic development in Nigeria and Papua New Guinea was also critiqued in two letters to the editor of African Arts. In 1975, William Wyckom Jr. observed a “curious sameness” between the Oshogbo and Papua New Guinean artists that worked with Georgina and Ulli Beier and claimed that they were selling a “gimmick.” (Letters to the Editor 1976) Z. Plocki responded by defending the Beiers’ efforts:

To suggest that the Beiers have a ‘gimmick’ that they are selling wherever they go that is limiting to art progress or that they are doing it for personal glory without any consideration for the people, and should ‘give it a rest,’ is farcical… They are stepping stones between the traditional art of the people and the twentieth century, and their fame is a by-product of their hard work. (1976, 8)
Plocki’s response aligns with Twins Seven Seven’s analogy of the Beiers as kind of art “missionaries.” Unfortunately, there is little documentation critiquing the Beiers’ process of working with indigenous artists and those that have offered frank critique requested I not directly quote them. Beier endeavoured to employ a methodology that encouraged creative individuals to trust in their imagination rather than basing instruction on European models of arts instruction. In her effort to support artists’ development without introducing Western aesthetics, Beier introduced artists to Western materials and techniques but did not establish rules so that they could elude “the restraints of ‘academic’ training or cultural conventions.” (G. Beier 1977, 3) Although it was naïve of her to think that she could introduce Western materials without some of the conventions associated with them, she tried to preserve the “innocence” of artists because they had “no abstract notions of ‘beauty’ or ‘style’” (G. Beier 1977, 3) which allowed them artistic freedom. This description of the methodology she employed, as well as some of the issues it raised, is important to consider particularly because much of the documentation of the residencies was written by Georgina or Ulli Beier.

While her husband worked towards awakening cultural and national consciousness in young students at UPNG’s creative writing programme,28 Georgina Beier began artistic activities in Port Moresby by maintaining her own practice. The first major work she produced was a mural on their university house (fig. 2.2), which launched public interest in Beier; she later learned that locals referred to their house as “white man’s ‘Haus Tambaran’, the white man’s spirit house.” (G. Beier and Tröger 2001, 22) She created a graphic linear panorama of geometric shapes and flat, bold figures such as a horse-like animal and rider that peered out from the wall of the house onto the street. Her use of strong lines and contrast with minimal colours created a narrative drama that challenged viewers to decipher figures that were not derived from Papua New Guinean imagery; instead they resembled the imaginary figures she painted in Oshogbo (fig. 2.3).

Beier began seeking opportunities to work with local artists, and requested friends and acquaintances let her know about talented people. (Rosi 2010) She also met creative individuals while travelling around the country; for example, she travelled to

28 Ulli Beier did not have an active role in the residencies, but he was a behind-the-scenes supporter. He focused on teaching creative writing courses at the university as well as staging theatre productions, and editing and publishing creative writing by Papua New Guineans. However, he included art works in publications such as Kovave. He also used his affiliation with the university to pressure it to establish the Centre for New Guinea Cultures in 1969, which hosted artists in residence. Together with Georgina, he promoted artists’ work through their local and international connections and arranged exhibitions. During their stay in Port Moresby and long after, Ulli Beier wrote about the artists, particularly Mathias Kauage with whom he and Georgina had a long friendship.
Yule Island in 1969 in search of art work for *Kovave*, a creative writing and arts journal established by Ulli Beier. (Eastburn 2006, 39) In this way Beier met the artists she invited for artist residencies at her home studio. Those she invited had no formal experience with contemporary visual arts, although it was likely that they had experience with customary arts.

At their home, Beier set up an art studio in the living room and designated a bedroom for screen-printing.29 (Eastburn 2006, 17) This became the location of Papua New Guinea’s first contemporary visual art residencies. Ulli Beier referred to the artists that came to work with Georgina as artists in residence, although they worked in a collaborative workshop environment. (U. Beier 2005, 10) The residencies did not begin as a formal programme with specific goals like many other residency programmes, yet they were not simply workshops because artists spent from four weeks to several months there learning and developing artistic skills, techniques, and processes. Residencies were informal and founded on personal relationships. She explained:

> I was not paid for what I was doing – in fact we subsidized the activities from Ulli’s salary. This gave me a great deal of freedom: I was not responsible to some outside authority. We had no exams and no syllabus. In other words, nobody could impose a ‘norm’ onto us that everybody had to follow. If you teach in an institution, you cannot pick your students. I had the luxury of working only with people with whom I could find the right wavelength. (G. Beier and Tröger 2001, 109)

Without responsibility to an employer or institution, Beier guided artists in directions she thought they would benefit from most. She worked with minimal resources and focused on drawing, woodblock and screen-printing, and eventually painting, as the residencies developed from a single artist to several at one time. Rosi wrote, “once skills were proficient, [Beier] made arrangements to exhibit their work as soon as possible to the public at home and abroad. This action not only helped new artists to become financially independent but, equally important, the publicity and success reinforced their confidence and identity as contemporary [Papua New Guinean] artists.” (1994, 139) Georgina and Ulli Beier and also Craig utilised their experience and connections in the wider contemporary art world by arranging international exhibitions for some of the artists they worked with. (Rosi 1994, 119) For example, Akis’ international exhibitions include Alladin Gallery, Sydney, Australia (1969); University of Sussex, England (1970);

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29 Beier learned and practiced printing techniques in Nigeria. She participated in a printmaking workshop for Mbari Mbayo Club conducted by Dutch graphic artist, Ru Van Rossem in 1966, organised by Ulli Beier. (Oyelami 1982, 86)
Solidariad Art, Philippines (1971); Otis Art Institute Gallery, Los Angeles, USA (1971); and Museum of Natural History, New York, USA (1978). (Eastburn 2006, 21) The Beiers purchased numerous works, in some cases to encourage artistic growth and self-confidence, in other cases to help artists become financially independent. They also sold artists’ work from their home/studio. It is unclear whether Georgina and Ulli Beier retained commission from local and/or international sales of work made by the artists in residence, but it has been suggested that they financially profited from their relationships with Papua New Guinean artists. (Artist working in Papua New Guinea 2011)

Residencies were not fixed in length; rather they lasted as long as they were effective for the artists and Beier. They often ended if artist’s family commitments took them away from Port Moresby. This style of long-term or open-ended residencies created a process of continuous development with follow-up and follow-through that was not always possible in art workshops.

Tom Craig

Another sponsor of artist residencies in Papua New Guinea was Scottish artist and educator Tom Craig. During his first years teaching in rural Papua New Guinea in the mid-1960s, Craig realised that imposing his ideas of Western art prevented students’ creativity because, by presenting the history and rules of Western aesthetics as a benchmark, he ignored local epistemologies. Therefore, he altered his methods “to open students up and allow them to cultivate their own potential ideas” while also teaching students “that village values and activities were worthwhile, and that they should feel proud of their traditional heritage and could learn from it.” (Craig pers. comm. in Rosi 1994, 141-143) Rosi explained that Craig’s objective as an arts educator was “to help young Papua New Guineans develop a meaningful relationship to their own artistic heritage… this did not mean imitating the past.” (Rosi 1994, 151) Craig went on to become Director of the School for Expressive Arts at Goroka Teacher’s College in Eastern Highlands Province (1968-1972), where he trained art teachers and mentored creative individuals like Jakupa Ako, a janitor at the school who went on to become a prominent artist. There are no records of art work Craig produced while teaching art in Papua New Guinea and his publications do not indicate that he was actively producing art work to exhibit. His roles were teacher, mentor, and advocate. Craig’s innovative teaching techniques and success with the Expressive Arts Programme earned him recognition and praise from the Department of Education. (Rosi 1994, 120)
In 1971 government funding was designated for arts and culture initiatives, and Craig proposed a “national centre to promote contemporary art for furthering the growth of national culture.” (Rosi 1994, 120) When the Creative Arts Centre was established a year later in 1972, Craig was named Director and continued in that role when it became the National Arts School (1976-1983). Although there are no specific accounts of consultation between Craig and Beier for the proposal of the national arts centre, Beier commended the Creative Arts Centre’s institutional framework in subsequent publications. (G. Beier 1974; G. Beier and Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies 1974) The establishment of residencies and institutional shift from residencies to coursework at the Creative Arts Centre and National Arts School are described in the next section of this chapter.

Although Beier returned to Nigeria in 1971 before the Centre was opened, Craig hired her when she returned in 1974 to teach in the textiles department of the Creative Arts Centre thus demonstrating a level of collegiality and support between them. (Rosi 1994, 174)

**Sponsorship – from individuals to institutions**

By the end of 1969, Beier’s home studio was congested with several artists in residence. Therefore, the Beiers and others pressured UPNG for official sponsorship and facilities, a request that was granted in 1970 when the Centre for New Guinea Cultures was established.³⁰ (U. Beier 2005, 10; Eastburn 2006, 17) The title is somewhat misleading because the ‘centre’ consisted of a small structure behind the Beiers’ university housing that included a workshop space. (U. Beier 2005, 10; Eastburn 2006, 17) The centre also hosted creative writing and indigenous research activities that Ulli Beier was involved with.

This marks the move from sponsorship by individuals to government investment through educational institutions. Residencies at the Centre for New Guinea Cultures followed a similar design to those in Beier’s home, and she continued to facilitate a collaborative workshop environment, but she was not officially employed by the university. Rosi described interactions at the centre: “new artists and visiting craftsmen

³⁰ It was based on local village architecture and called the Centre for New Guinea Cultures. Ulli Beier described the exchange that resulted in UPNG’s decision to build a studio: “The more activities grew, the more unmanageable the situation became. In the end Georgina went to John Gunther [the Vice-Chancellor] and said to him: ‘I’ve decided to buy a dilapidated old truck and let it break down in our back yard. Then I will convert it into a studio.’” (U. Beier 2005, 10; Eastburn 2006, 17) A dilapidated truck was not appealing to the university, as Beier presumed, and so the Vice-Chancellor recommended building a studio.
could work side by side and draw mutual support and inspiration from one another.” (Rosi 1994, 133)

By 1971, the Centre for New Guinea Cultures was insufficient for the proliferation of aspiring visual artists in Port Moresby. This was resolved when Craig successfully proposed a larger national arts centre, which opened in 1972. The Creative Arts Centre was funded and administered by the Department of Education and UPNG. (Rosi 1994, 157) However, the centre was independent of UPNG’s academic requirements. Craig described the central philosophy for the new art centre:

The Centre aims to provide facilities for the continuation of Papua New Guinean art in all fields and to provide artists with living and working space, and materials and tools. It recognizes that Papua New Guinea is involved in a clash of cultures, that Papua New Guineans are striving to maintain certain cultural values, to change without becoming uprooted and to link their future aspirations to their past heritage. The Centre is trying to give artists the opportunity to develop their own talents, to turn the potential disadvantage of a cultural transition into advantage and to stimulate extensions of Papua New Guinean expression so that they can rediscover their roots. The Centre is not intended as a school in the normal sense of the word. It does not have formal entrance requirements but caters for that special group with outstanding abilities. It does not operate on the basis of formal courses of specified duration. No certificate will be given at the end of a student’s residence. (Cochrane 2007, 144; T. Craig 1973)

With ambitious objectives, the Creative Arts Centre aimed to encourage and privilege creative expression during the time of national transition. Residencies offered at the Creative Arts Centre were more formal than Beier’s, but still exclusive of academic directives. With incentives like an allowance or scholarship and opportunities for public and private commissions outside of the centre, the residencies promoted careers in visual arts in Port Moresby. The term ‘artist in residence’ denoted a level of professionalism, which, to Beier and Craig, implied self-determination that was important during the move towards independence.

The centre’s objectives clearly stated that it was not a school and would not institute formal courses. Such aspirations may well have been viable, suggested by the

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31 Although the Creative Arts Centre was officially established on 4 January 1972, it was not until the beginning of 1975, the year of national independence, that the facilities were complete and officially opened to the public. (Rosi 1994, 157; 181) The staff included visual arts, drama, and creative writing teachers and grew from three, including Craig, in February 1972 to sixteen in 1975. (Rosi 1994, 158; 181)
32 The Creative Arts Centre’s initial annual budget was AU$7000 with an additional maintenance budget of AU$5000. (Rosi 1994, 158)
33 Craig is referring to the changes associated with Australia’s withdrawal, and the emergence of an independent Papua New Guinea.
34 These aims were reiterated in Georgina Beier’s 1974 essay “A Papua New Guinean Alternative to a Degree Course in Fine Art.” (G. Beier and Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies 1974)
Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture adopting a similar format, but it is evident that the desire for qualified workers prevailed. During the period of transition when local staff was expected to replace foreign consultants, formal qualifications were required. In mid-1976, the Creative Arts Centre’s Board of Directors decided that the centre’s commitment to diversity and professionalism required additional specialisation and more rigorous educational training at a tertiary level. (Rosi 1994, 187) Craig noted that this move was propelled by growing resentment from some parents who were discouraging, even refusing to allow their children to become artists because, after years of primary and secondary schooling, they wanted them to have reliable jobs that would contribute to the income of the family. For instance, the Public Service Departments were refusing to pay students at the Creative Arts Centre anything more than “tea boy wages” because they had no so-called “professional” credentials. (Craig 1989 in Rosi 1994, 188) Although these changes seemed to undermine the original purpose of the Centre, Craig commented: “we had no choice but to begin giving diplomas.” (Craig 1989 in Rosi 1994, 188) As a result, the Creative Arts Centre changed to the National Arts School in 1976 and entrance requirements and formal certificate and diploma programmes were established to ensure continued government funding. (Crowdy 2002) Just as the Creative Arts Centre accommodated more artists and created opportunities than the Centre for New Guinea Cultures, so the National Arts School further increased opportunities for professional artists in Port Moresby. The major difference with this shift was the introduction of formal courses in music, fine arts, graphic design, and textiles. The school included an art gallery that became the primary venue for exhibitions in Port Moresby, including exhibitions for artists not associated with the National Art School. (Cochrane 2007, 145)

In the late 1980s and 1990s, contemporary art in Papua New Guinea waned as a result of cutbacks caused by an economic downturn. Although there were no documented residencies in Port Moresby between 1992 and 2010, there has been recent interest in resurrecting non-academic programmes akin to the residencies of the 1970s by Papua New Guinean artist and educator Daniel Waswas. (Waswas 2010) As a fulltime artist and former Director of the Melanesian Institute for Arts and Communications at

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35 Papua New Guinea’s financial crisis was due to the Bougainville War (1988-1998). Bougainville, an eastern island province, is geographically part of the Solomon Islands but was attached to German New Guinea during colonial divisions. Bougainville’s large copper mine was the greatest single contributor to the nation’s GDP and closed at the start of the war in 1988. In addition to causing devastating loss of life (20,000+), the Bougainville War became the biggest drain on the nation’s funds. Bougainville became autonomous in 2005. (Crocombe 2001, 443; 572-574)
UPNG, Waswas recognises the benefits of both academic and non-academic programmes like the residencies instituted by Georgina Beier and advocates for reinstituting them to complement academic training. 36 (Waswas 2010)

Criteria

Unlike examples in my subsequent case studies, Papua New Guinea’s residencies had no formal application process or programme structure. There were no specific criteria for Beier to take on artists other than her intuition about their artistic potential, similar to her rationale for collaborating with artists in Africa. Perhaps the sole criterion was that she only worked with artists with no previous experience. Residencies were often extended due to her compatibility with the artist’s personality, as indicated in her statement about working with artists on the same ‘wavelength.’ 37 Nor were there specific requirements of artists while in residence with her. Since she was not employed by the university, and it is unclear whether she profited as an agent or art dealer, the return for Beier’s efforts seems to have been the personal satisfaction of a meaningful activity that was also a part of developing creative industries to contribute socially, culturally, and economically to post-colonial Papua New Guinea.

The Creative Arts Centre did not have specific criteria either, as Craig wrote:

There are no pre-requisite entry qualifications and scholarships are continued for as long as the staff and students agree that the experience is beneficial. Traditional painters, carvers, musicians and dancers are invited to the centre for varying lengths of time to work alongside students. (T. Craig 1976, 3)

Craig’s explanation clarifies that there were both artists in residence and students at the Creative Arts Centre unlike the Centre for New Guinea Cultures, which did not have specific departments and was therefore for artists in residence rather than students. Students at the Creative Arts Centre were offered directed training, while artists in residence were encouraged to participate in a collaborative environment with an

36 Waswas said that it is as important for students to learn from trained teaching professionals as it is for elders to share specialist skills so that Papua New Guineans begin with the symbols and meanings of their own culture. He stated that by combining both non-academic and academic programmes artists will emerge with confidence about themselves, that will be evident in the art produced which will communicate: “I know my values, I know who I am now, I know my future.” (Waswas 2010) While the combination of programmes can not resolve all of Waswas’ concerns for his students’ fluency with traditional values and culture, he recognises the success associated with non-academic programmes in the late-1960s and 1970s as a viable example for fostering contemporary arts today.

37 Inviting artists based on intuition had been successful for the Beiers in Nigeria; for example, she recalled that Twins Seven Seven was a unique person who intrigued them so they invited him to stay in Oshogbo “without quite knowing why” and began a lifelong friendship and a unique artistic career for Twins Seven Seven. (G. Beier 1977, 6; U. Beier 1999)
“apprenticeship method of instruction unlike a Western art school.” (Rosi 1994, 156) Craig did not clarify what the criteria were for acceptance into the centre and for scholarships or funding.38

It is evident that there were two streams of artists at the Creative Arts Centre: those who wanted to develop professional careers within institutions and those who wanted access to the facilities and materials to produce their art. The latter were artists in residence and the former were students. Although there is little evidence of what prompted artists to choose courses or a residency, it seems likely that it was based on the artists’ career aspirations. For example, Mathias Kauage, Beier’s second artist in residence, was a resident or “member” while Ruki Fame enrolled as a student in 1972. (Rosi 1994, 159) They both had successful careers but Fame went on to teach at the National Arts School and UPNG while Kauage established an independent workshop. Due to limited documentation about the residencies, it is unclear whether formal agreements preceded the residencies at the centre. Cochrane confirmed that artists in residence “stayed at the centre for as long as they and the staff felt they were benefiting.” (Cochrane and Mel 1997, 36) Typically, artists in residence did not live at the Creative Arts Centre, although some resided in their studios. (Rosi 2010) The only artist in residence accommodated at the Creative Arts Centre and National Arts School was Jakupa Ako.

In 1972, Craig specified that the Creative Arts Centre would take fifty percent of proceeds from exhibition sales and that the funds accrued would help defray scholarships and other institutional costs. Rosi observed, “By instituting this rule he hoped students would develop a sense of responsibility towards the school, and recognise that their education cost money.” (1994, 197-8) Another means for both the institution and artists to profit was the Creative Arts Centre’s Kontempri Shop, which opened in November 1972 to sell art works. (Rosi 1994, 162) Craig believed that the centre should generate its own income and so, with the growth of its professional facilities and skills, it emphasised applied arts with students working on public commissions, such as government buildings and interiors to “help artists and village craftsmen adapt their skills to the needs of a

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38 The Creative Arts Centre’s first scholarship was extended to metal sculptor Ruki Fame upon Craig’s suggestion and the Board of Governor’s approval, but does not detail what qualified him other than having worked with Georgina Beier. (Rosi 1994, 159) Fame, a professional welder, was encouraged by Beier to develop his skills as a metal sculptor and in return he taught Beier to weld before she left for Nigeria in 1971. (G. Beier and Tröger 2001, 25) This implies that scholarships were offered to known artists but the process is unclear.
developing society.” (National Arts School 1984 in Rosi 1994, 177) It is unclear whether fees were taken from commissioned projects.

When the Creative Arts Centre became the National Arts School, residencies transformed yet again. Artists in residence at the National Arts School had a still lesser role as more artists embarked on academic routes. The National Arts School apparently offered short-term residencies to artists with outstanding abilities to discover their talents and demonstrate skills, put on exhibitions, or perform. 39 (Rosi 2010) Jakupa Ako was the only permanent artist in residence at the National Arts School. Jakupa was given a long-term residency so that students could learn from and interact with a pioneering artist who would not have been hired as a lecturer because he lacked the credentials required by the institution. Rosi remarked that the exception was made for Jakupa to remain an artist in residence at the National Arts School because he was awarded Order of the British Empire in 1981 for his contributions to contemporary art; the highest honour a Papua New Guinean artist had received at the time. 40 (Rosi 1994, 345) The complexity of this case-by-case basis for artists in residence versus students at the National Arts School will be clarified through descriptions of the individual artists.

The benefit of artists in residence alongside students and staff at the National Arts School was that they aided in the retention of aspects of the workshop-style programmes at the Centre for New Guinea Cultures and the Creative Arts Centre. Although there were fewer artists in residence at the National Arts School, they had enough of a presence to be recognised by Cochrane for being “respected by the student body for their artistic vision and for their contribution to contemporary culture.” (Cochrane 2007, 145) Artist residencies were a credential in themselves, which helped maintain a level of status for artists taking non-formal routes.

**Artists**

The five artists selected for examination of the early residencies in Papua New Guinea began their careers between 1969 and 1974. Some careers, like Marie Aihi’s, were brief, while others, like Martin Morububuna’s, extend to 2011. As the youngest artist to join the Creative Arts Centre, in 1974, Morububuna is the only one of the five artists

39 However, as is the case with documentation during the time, I have found few references to visual artists holding these short residencies aside from Australians Gleny Kohnke in 1973 and Frank Hodgkinson in 1977 and so they are not detailed here, as the intention is to focus on opportunities for Papua New Guinean artists. (Kohnke 2011; Wagner Art Gallery 2011)

40 Kauage received the same award of Order of the British Empire by Her Majesty the Queen in 1998. (October Gallery 1999)
living in 2011 and he works independently in Port Moresby. His experience extends beyond his relatively brief residency at the Creative Art Centre to one at de Young Museum in 2009.

Timothy Akis

One of the first artists that Beier invited to work in her home studio was Timothy Akis. Akis, from Tsembaga Village, Simbai Valley in Madang Province, is acknowledged as Papua New Guinea's first professional contemporary artist. (U. Beier 2005; U. Beier and Otis Art Institute of Los Angeles. 1971; Eastburn 2006) In 1969, Akis was visiting Port Moresby with anthropologist Georgeda Buchbinder, for whom he worked as interpreter and guide. (G. Beier and Tröger 2001, 23; Eastburn 2006, 15) When he could not articulate something in Pidgin, he would draw it. He also helped Buchbinder categorise local flora and fauna and identify specimens by making rudimentary sketches. (Rosi 1994, 295) Buchbinder knew that Georgina Beier was interested in mentoring artists and showed her some of Akis’ work. Beier recalled, “Georgeda wanted to know whether I thought Akis had any artistic talent. On the strength of these very rough drawings I would have had to say no. But Akis had a nervous sensitive energy about him, and this quality was present in these inarticulate sketches.” (G. Beier and Tröger 2001, 23) She qualified why she invited Akis for a residency even though she did not see clear artistic skill: “If you judge a person’s creativity on their first attempts, you could easily miss out on the most interesting artists.” (G. Beier and Tröger 2001, 110) She endorsed her method of inviting artists based on intuition, which raises an important question: would creative individuals like Akis have embarked on a career in contemporary visual arts if the only option was seeking entrance to an institution? Based on the account below, it seems doubtful that Akis would have become the eminent figure he did without the personal guidance provided by Beier.

Beier invited Akis to work with her in her home studio for six weeks. She described the residency:

He worked with a feverish intensity for those six weeks with more suitable materials than those available in his remote area. He discovered the scale on which he could express himself best. He depicted the world he was intimate with, the animals that inhabit the Simbai Valley, cassowaries, lizards, bandicoots, and

41 Beier noted the anthropologist’s name was Geordida Bick, (G. Beier 1971, 24) but other publications including those by an anthropologist named Buckbinder working in Papua New Guinea in the late 1960s suggests it was indeed Georgeda Buchbinder.
snakes. People occur less often in his drawings and tend to be indistinguishable from his representations of spirits. (G. Beier 1971, 24)

Beier encouraged Akis to compose drawings according to his vision: this is evident in Snek slip i stap, orait wanpela rat emi slip antap, orait wanpela pikinini muruk slip daunbelo [A snake is sleeping with a rat asleep on top and a cassowary chick below it] (1969) (fig. 2.4 centre): the figures do not represent mythological iconography but animals he had drawn for Buchbinder to which he began adding imaginary elements to create “a poetic vision of his native forest, with its birds and animals and plants and spirits.” (G. Beier and Tröger 2001, 111) While there are noticeable similarities between his early depictions of forest spirits (fig. 2.4 right) and customary masks due to the flat, enlarged features of the head, Akis went on to imagine creatures like Tupela long (fig. 2.5), which were independent of traditions and mythology. In the later work, Akis combined figures, stylistic motifs and patterning, and added vibrant colours to create unique imagery representative of his imagination more than customary forms.

Beier arranged an exhibition of Akis’ drawings at the university at the end of the six-week residency, which made him a celebrity in Port Moresby. (Rosi 1994, 296) Although Akis made new friends and earned “more money that he had ever earned before,” (Rosi 1994, 296) he was anxious to return to his village, Tsembaga, and so he left Port Moresby at the end of the residency. In 1971, he needed more money to maintain kinship obligations and so he returned to Beier and joined other artists for a residency at the Centre for New Guinea Cultures that lasted several months. Akis was anxious to catch up with other artists’ success and considered relocating to Port Moresby to make a living from his work, but Beier felt that he was not aware of the challenges he would have to face:

He did not realize he would not have been able to support himself on his drawings. He was not aware to what extent his living expenses were in fact subsidized. Had I been able to introduce him to etching, he might have stood a much better chance… He was unaware of the number of financial and social problems he would have to face which would have greatly disturbed him at this stage – for example, there would have been nowhere for him to live with his family. (G. Beier 1974, 9)

Beier’s reflection affirms that she was subsidising the artists’ expenses and that she was conscious of the limitations of the nascent market for contemporary art in Port Moresby particularly as more artists came on the scene. Her comment also indicates that since she was independently sponsoring these artist residencies, she did not have all the resources
she would have liked, such as etching equipment; she was limited to materials that were easily accessible in Port Moresby, such as ink and paint.

Akis did not relocate to Port Moresby. In 1972, the Beiers had left but Craig offered Akis a scholarship to the Creative Arts Centre. Akis did not take a permanent position there, but arranged to hold annual residencies that typically lasted several months. Rosi explained that although “he was again reluctant to leave his family [for the annual residencies], he was also drawn by the opportunity to develop his art and to gain substantial financial rewards to help modernize his village.” (Rosi 1994, 297) This was a problematical situation for contemporary artists that longed to maintain village connections and achieve customary status through kinship obligations but were drawn to the opportunities in Port Moresby. Akis lived between two worlds. When he was based in his village where cooperative labour and group activities were not conducive to individual expression, there was no audience for his contemporary styles. In spite of this, the money he earned from his art allowed him to fulfil kinship obligations, which, in turn, earned him status in the village. His other world was in Port Moresby where he produced art. Apparently, the detachment from village life was necessary for him to freely develop an artistic vision because he did not begin producing art in his village until the late 1970s.

In 1978, Akis held a year-long residency at the National Arts School and was accompanied by his wife and daughters. During the residency, he held two exhibitions and designed silkscreen prints that were exhibited in Stuttgart. Following that success, he built a studio in his home village, which indicates the changing village attitudes and local pride in his accomplishments and reinvestment in the village. (Rosi 1994, 299-300) The growing acceptance of Akis’ artistic practice was fuelled by changing social situations and acceptance of Kina (currency) in customary exchanges. Roy Rappaport, an anthropologist working in Tsembaga, recalled that the studio brought Akis much delight. Rappaport explained, Akis “would go into the studio and sit there giggling because the fantastic figures he was creating evidently struck him as being very funny.” (Rappaport pers. comm. in Rosi 1994, 300) While the residencies in Port Moresby were essential for introducing Akis to materials, techniques, and supporters that led to sell-out exhibitions, he remained ambivalent about Port Moresby: for him the ability to practice at home was the ultimate demonstration of personal, social, and financial achievement.

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42 Prior to the acceptance of Kina, pigs, pearl shells, and other traditional money were exchanged.
Many of Akis’ *wantok* (literally ‘one talk’ but understood to encompass a kinship system) from Chimbu Province in the Highlands living in Port Moresby attended Akis’ first exhibition in 1969, including Mathias Kauage. Kauage had been working as a cleaner at the Administrative College in Port Moresby when he attended the exhibition opening and “was so deeply impressed that the experience changed his entire life.” (U. Beier 2005, 80) Beier described her first impression of Kauage as “depressed, inhibited but obviously a man of great hidden strength, like a volcano waiting to erupt.” (G. Beier and Tröger 2001, 111)

Kauage began copying illustrations from schoolbooks and brought them to Beier, hoping for an invitation to work with her. She was not impressed by the drawings but, similarly to her experience with Akis, she recognised potential in Kauage and so she bought the “hideous drawings.” (G. Beier 1974, 35) Buying poor-quality and unoriginal drawings seems at odds with Beier’s objectives and patronising to the extent that it could create the perception that the European woman was paying for whatever people presented her. But she rationalised that the process allowed her to communicate with him and then to begin encouraging him to trust his imagination. (G. Beier 1974, 35)

Under Beier’s tutelage, Kauage began drawing fantastical figures of horses with wings and other imaginary creatures. (U. Beier 2005, 85) Kauage began selling his drawings which allowed him to quit his job as a cleaner and he became an artist in residence, working with Beier every day. This created a problem though: with more time to focus on art, Kauage realised that “even his fertile imagination had limits,” he could not draw all day every day. (U. Beier 2005, 85) This prompted Beier to introduce Kauage to new techniques including woodcut, linocut, and copper panel. She felt that his heavy, solid shapes would transfer well into woodblock prints and that this would allow him to concentrate on techniques as well as compositions. (G. Beier 1974, 14) This illustrates that Beier’s process was reflexive rather than preconceived; she used her knowledge, abilities, and resources to help artists build on their own skill sets. She introduced techniques that she was familiar with and where she could access the necessary materials. The woodblock printing technique was not related to any customary practice; it was the designs not the process that referenced customs and/or traditions.

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43 Also known as Simbu Province.
Kauage’s untitled composition with three faces (fig. 2.6) is typical of his early work in which he drew from the traditions of his village; he employed chevrons, chequers, and other decorative devices found on shields, spears, baskets, arm bands, and other adornments throughout the Highlands. (Simons, Stevenson, and Perc Tucker Regional Art Gallery 1990, 56) His incorporation of those designs in a contemporary woodblock print substantiates Beier’s comments that artists found freedom outside the constraints of traditional culture to express themselves creatively, because although they were inspired by familiar cultural motifs, the images were independent of customary context.

The woodcut prints (fig. 2.6) and copper panel works that Kauage produced in 1969 and 1970 were exhibited at UPNG and a travelling exhibition that went to Sydney, the University of the South Pacific in Fiji, the Ife Festival in Nigeria, the University of Sussex in England, and the Otis Gallery in Los Angeles, along with work by other Papua New Guinea artists including Akis and Aihi. (Rosi 1994, 323-24) William Wilson wrote one of two reviews of work at the Otis Art Institute for the Los Angeles Times and described the works as “primitive and childlike.” 44 (Wilson 1971) His review of the work as naïve and exotic is unsurprising from an art critic who would have had limited knowledge of Papua New Guinean culture. His cryptic description reveals an uneasy approach to the works and that he did not necessarily know how to decipher what he was seeing, situating it somewhere between ritual and modern. He wrote: “The native work still bears the evidence of enthralled involvement… Patterns are more restrained, better organized, more ‘civilized’ in short… The artists are beginning to see the paper as a ‘window’. That’s European.” (Wilson 1971) Wilson was criticised the following week in a letter to the editor from Owen Podger for “his ignorance” and Podger “congratulated [Ulli Beier] for assisting indigenous artists to express themselves fully, in new materials that free them from the taboos of the old order.” (Podger 1971) Three articles in the Los Angeles Times over the course of three weeks shows that the exhibition garnered significant attention, even if some of the audience did not fully understand art works that were still in the early stages of development.

Unlike Akis, Kauage was comfortable living and working in Port Moresby and continued as an artist in residence at the Centre for New Guinea Cultures. After the Beiers left in 1971, Kauage became affiliated with the Creative Arts Centre which, according to Rosi, “was instrumental in helping him maintain and develop his career as

44 Beverley E. Johnson also wrote a shorter general description of the exhibition that included reference to Akis’ work. (Johnson 1971)
an artist.” (Rosi 1994, 324) However, it is unclear what this affiliation was; Craig referred to Kauage as one of the first students on scholarship at the Creative Arts Centre but also referred to those first students as artists in residence. (T. Craig 1973; Rosi 2010)

Although Kauage’s status during his stay is unclear, he maintained an independent practice and exhibited at various locations.

Kauage maintained a close relationship with the Beiers and they continued to support their friend when possible. He spent time working with them upon their return to Port Moresby in 1974 and later went to Sydney and Bayreuth, Germany, where they worked at universities. While Kauage was working as warden of the student village at the National Arts School in 1975, his room at the National Art School was small and Georgina and Ulli Beier invited him to work in their living room so he could paint large canvases. (Rosi 1994, 326) Georgina Beier described Kauage’s series of paintings depicting Independence celebrations as “some of his most spectacular paintings.” (G. Beier and Tröger 2001, 34) He revisited the series in 1999. *Independence Celebration* (1999) (fig. 2.7) is not from the 1975 series but is similar to the originals and demonstrates Kauage’s compositions evolved technically from heavy shapes to energetic and flowing lines, while his subject matter progressed from imaginary figures and customary references to social commentary incorporating a melding of customary and contemporary designs. Kauage’s painting expressed the euphoria felt throughout Port Moresby during the Independence celebrations. Within the commemorative scenes, he portrayed an emergent national identity that merged traditional with modern as seen through villagers resplendent with *bilas* (Pidgin for adornment, typically headdresses, face paint, waistcloths, armbands, and pig-tusk ornaments) utilising Western conveniences like automobiles. The depictions of Port Moresby during independence celebrations also highlight that the events brought various groups together as Papua New Guineans, not just *wantok* or tribal groups.

Without an official affiliation with the National Arts School in the late 1980s, Kauage established his own studio in Port Moresby, which included a workshop where he taught family members to copy his style, complete paintings and prints, and/or assist him, allowing him more time to promote and sell his work. By teaching family members painting and printing techniques, Kauage recreated the workshop environment at the Centre for New Guinea Cultures. The major difference was that the family members did not exhibit or sell the works as their own; art works carried Kauage’s name, which earned

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45 Kauage had minimal responsibilities as warden and was provided with accommodation, studio access, art supplies, and exhibition facilities.
higher prices. Cochrane reported that the workshop was intended to contribute to Kauage’s reputation and the group’s earning capacity. (Cochrane 2007, 127) Yet the workshop might account for the declining quality in Kauage’s work, which led to waning appreciation. While the workshop may have resulted in some works of lesser quality, the concept was both an entrepreneurial endeavour as well as a customary system of involving wantok in communal activity for the benefit of the extended family or tribe that Kauage’s work supported. Art historian Elizabeth Rankin notes that there are parallel examples in South Africa such as wood sculptures made by Phutuma Seoka and his extended family. Rankin suggests: “While the West seeks ‘development’ in a modern artist, and perpetual innovation, those who enter the Western art market from a different base may assume that all that is wanted is ‘more of the same’ and find ways to multiply their output – often enough with a loss of interest from the very market it was aimed to please.” (Rankin 2011) Rankin’s assessment that perhaps we judge such work as inferior by applying inappropriate standards from another cultural system provides a valuable point of contrast without excluding artists’ desire for originality to acknowledge a alternate vantage point from Western notions of art for art’s sake to recognise that innovation may have been on par with the desire to sell work. Also, the extensive trust in the communal wantok system throughout Papua New Guinea contributed to the success of the workshop style of residencies: individual creativity was encouraged but there was still a sense of collaboration and exchange, particularly as other artists joined Kauage as artists in residence at the Centre for New Guinea Cultures and Creative Arts Centre.

By 1986, Kauage was no longer working or living at the National Art School and his work was not in great demand because critical collectors and National Art School staff felt “his prices were too high, the quality of his work was uneven, and his imagery had lost the spark of its former vitality and ingenuity.” (Rosi 1994, 326) The inconsistency is likely related to his association with the Beiers because, when he worked with them, as the following analysis demonstrates, his work was at its strongest. This may also suggest Georgina Beier’s guidance or influence over his artistic practice.

Evidence of Kauage’s inconsistency is apparent in a comparison of two paintings, Helicopter (1982) (fig. 2.8) and Okuk’s son at Port Moresby airport (1987) (fig.2.9). In 1982, Kauage was working independently in Port Moresby and in 1987 he spent two months with the Beiers in Sydney. Okuk’s son at Port Moresby airport (1987) (fig. 2.9) is one of a series of paintings to mark the death of his fellow clansman, Deputy Prime Minister Iambakey Okuk in 1987. Within the painting, Kauage represents Okuk’s status by
including representations of the nation and modernity through flags, a plane, and motorcycle. Kauage referenced Chimbu (his home area of the Highlands) culture by decorating figures with traditional Chimbu *bilas*. Both paintings demonstrate Kauage’s fascination with modern modes of transportation that he decorated with motifs and patterns from Papua New Guinean *bilas*. *Helicopter* shows the inconsistency that Rosi referred to and appears to be more of an imitation of Kauage’s style than an original work. *Helicopter* lacks the sense of direction, themes, and composition evident in works like *Independence Celebration* (fig. 2.7) and *Okuk’s son at Port Moresby airport* (fig. 2.9). For instance, the woman seems to sit awkwardly within the motionless helicopter as opposed to the fluidity and movement of Okuk with his motorcycle and the airplane that curves into the canvas as if it had just landed. The decorative elements of *Helicopter* also lack a refinement and explicit references to Papua New Guinean and other identities through *bilas* and flags that would be flown at the airport, such as the United States’, German, and British flags. Although the floral-type motifs around the helicopter might represent stars in a night scene, they simply fill up space rather than create the strong compositions evident in Kauage’s other paintings. Furthermore, his interest in the nude woman and the relatively realist approach is unusual, particularly when compared to his consistent stylisation of women and attention to detail in other works. While the work might have been produced by a family member or someone working with Kauage, this seems unlikely when *Helicopter* was part of the *Luk Luk Gen!* exhibition (1990) curated by Susan Cochrane and Hugh Stevenson, who both have extensive experience in Papua New Guinea. Therefore, *Helicopter* seems to corroborate the criticisms Rosi reported of Kauage’s unevenness and lack of vitality. Although Kauage was one of Papua New Guinea’s most prominent artists, it seems there were times he struggled to maintain that status. Moreover, that he produced more innovative work when under Beier’s influence suggests that she inspired or perhaps guided Kauage.

Although Kauage’s visits to see the Beiers in Sydney and Bayreuth were not residencies per se, the opportunities to reconnect with his mentor outside his normal environment are akin to the short-term residencies in more recent case studies in which artists leave home for a designated period to produce a body of work. They also affirm Beier’s ongoing commitment to the artists she worked with. The residencies at the Creative Arts Centre and National Art School provided Kauage with resources and a community of peers, but it was the residencies with the Beiers that led to the most fruitful of his opportunities for international travel and exhibitions.
**Marie Taita Aihi**

Beier saw Marie Taita Aihi’s drawings while travelling around Papua New Guinea in 1969 in search of art works to publish in *Kovave*, the literary journal edited by Ulli Beier. Born in Waima, Aihi grew up at the Catholic Mission on Yule Island where one of the nuns encouraged her to draw. In July of 1969, Beier invited Aihi to spend a month in Port Moresby at the recently opened Centre for New Guinea Cultures. (Eastburn 2006, 40) Unlike her predecessors, Aihi had only a single brief residency with Beier. She remained in Port Moresby after the residency, but even her stay in the capital was less than six months, when like Akis she returned to her village. Aihi provides an important contrast to the other artists because the residency did not launch a long, successful career for her. Her residency also raises an important point: contemporary artists were not immune to the deep-rooted social strictures in Papua New Guinean cultures, particularly women. Unfortunately, there is little information about Aihi’s career as an artist aside from a brief reference in Beier’s essays *Four artists from New Guinea* (1971) and *Modern Images from Ninjini* (1974) and art historian Melanie Eastburn’s *Papua New Guinea Prints* (2006).

Beier encouraged Aihi’s drawing and introduced her to woodcut and silkscreen printing as well as textile hand-printing and design. (G. Beier 1971, 25) Like her predecessors, Aihi created imaginary creatures; unlike the others, she decorated the animals she drew with traditional tattoo designs common to the Roro people of Waima (figs. 2.10 and 2.11). (G. Beier 1971, 25) Traditionally, Roro women were tattooed over their entire bodies (fig. 2.12). (Barton 1918) Although tattooing practices declined because missionaries discouraged rituals like tattooing, Aihi knew the designs and their associated meanings. Her 1969 untitled screen-print (fig. 2.10) closely followed Roro tattoo designs; the frog is covered with areau, a frigate bird convention found on the chest and breasts of Roro women (fig. 2.12). (Barton 1918, 28) Aihi decorated the turtle’s arms and legs with a ra’a ra’a (centipede) pattern traditionally tattooed on the upper part of women’s abdomen, and its centre is covered by a rectangular spiral Koio-Koio tattoo pattern representative of a “well-known fretted turtle-shell ornament of circular shape.” (Barton 1918, 30)

*River Creatures* (1969) (fig. 2.11) has a strong sense of balance from positioning a crocodile in a crescent below a stylised fish. There is a continuation of flat, bold forms
filled with designs that provide an increasing sense of energy and movement due to the use of more rounded forms. Without connecting the forms physically, Aihi links them through stylised *ra’a ra’a* tattoo patterns; *ra’a ra’a* crosses the fish’s mid-section and seems to continue onto a segment of the crocodile’s tail. Moreover, the fish’s head comes to a point directed towards the *ra’a ra’a* pattern across the crocodile’s midsection. Both creatures have almost equal space on the page, highlighting that Aihi, like Akis, was not concerned with realistic representation of the animals and was free to focus on the careful composition, symmetry, and details of tattoo patterns.

As with Akis and Kauage, Beier encouraged Aihi to begin with familiar images and motifs to ease her into learning techniques of printmaking during the residency. Once confident with those techniques, Aihi expanded her repertoire and embarked on textile design. Unfortunately, images of her textiles are not available, although Beverly Johnson mentioned the “hand-printed textiles (including traditional tattoo designs),” which are presumably Aihi’s, in her review of the 1971 exhibition at Otis Art Institute. (Johnson 1971) Since Aihi’s artistic career in Port Moresby lasted only half a year, it is difficult to analyse a breadth of techniques and subject matter in her art. These two prints, however, indicate that Aihi focused on creating detailed drawings and strong, balanced compositions in which colour was a secondary approach. She used similar forms and patterning for a mural on the New Guinea Research building commissioned by the Australian National University. (G. Beier 1971, 25) As is the case with much of Aihi’s work, there is little documentation of the mural.

Aihi’s prints (figs. 2.10 and 2.11) indicate her swift advancement from drawing to screen-printing using multiple screens. Compared to Kauage who began woodblock prints several months after starting a residency with Beier, Aihi’s control and composition demonstrates her affinity for design. This may have been on account of Beier’s effort to direct Aihi towards textile design by encouraging her to learn and develop screen and hand-printing techniques. During her residency with Beier, the talented designer’s work became so popular in Port Moresby “that the young artist could hardly keep up with the demands of her customers.” (Rosi 1994, 136) When Beier met Aihi, she was looking for a potential textile designer and manager for a small hand-printing textile cottage industry and Aihi demonstrated design and management skills. (G. Beier 1971, 25) Beier established a textile printing firm, Hara Hara Prints, and invited Aihi to manage the business (fig. 2.13). Beier wrote: “Marie did extremely well, produced superb designs and did in fact run the textile workshop for several months.” (1971, 25)
During a visit home, she had an accident and suspected sorcerers were threatening her because of her success in Port Moresby. Beier observed, “Some time after this it seemed she completely lost interest in her work and became apathetic.” (G. Beier 1971, 25) It appears that the stresses of trying to balance her new profession and financial management with traditional demands of relatives and wantok eventually became too much and Aihi returned home permanently. The threat of sorcery was a part of the social and cultural strictures of village life that followed her to Port Moresby and prohibited her from continuing on what seemingly would have been a successful career. However, since there are no references to women undertaking the early residencies aside from Aihi, these limitations were not unique to her.46 Elisabet Kauage, who worked in her husband Mathias Kauage’s workshop assisting with his paintings until his death, is one example of a woman artist who became successful when she launched a career painting and exhibiting independently. There are no records of Beier inviting other women for residencies at the Centre for New Guinea Cultures, which also suggests that the repercussions for disregard of social and cultural protocol were too grave for women to risk undertaking independent careers. Interestingly, the artists Beier worked closest with in Nigeria were also male: Muraina Oyelami, Bisi Fabunmi, and Twins Seven Seven. (G. Beier and Tröger 2001, 109) However, the majority of artists in residence in the other case studies have been male which suggests that the reasons are more complex than Beier’s experiences of working with male artists.

There is no documentation of work by Aihi after she left Hara Hara Prints in 1969. Nevertheless, Aihi’s residency with Beier offers another type of outcome, even if Aihi’s career was short-lived; her experience demonstrates that Beier at least occasionally attempted to provide opportunities for female artists as well as their male counterparts.

**Jakupa Ako**

Jakupa Ako, commonly known as Jakupa, hailed from Meganangu village in the Bena Bena Valley of the Eastern Highlands. While employed as a cleaner in the Expressive Arts Department at Goroka Teachers College, Jakupa began drawing and was encouraged by the staff, particularly Craig. (Eastburn 2006, 43; Rosi 1994, 350) The college dismissed him in 1970, however, because his artistic endeavours disrupted his cleaning duties. Jakupa returned to his village, married, successfully completed a mural at the J.K. McCarthy Museum in West Goroka, and found intermittent employment until

46 Susanne Kareke is another young woman whose drawings Beier came across while travelling the country but she does not appear to have taken up a residency. (Rosi 1994, 135)
1974 when Craig invited him to become an artist in residence at the Creative Arts Centre. (Cochrane and Mel 1997, 53; Rosi 1994, 351) Although Jakupa was hesitant to leave his wife behind in the village, he accepted the residency and, within a few years, his wife and young son joined him in accommodation at the student village. (Rosi 1994, 345) As an artist in residence, Jakupa’s responsibilities were to produce art work, participate in exhibitions arranged by the Centre, and travel for international exhibitions when funding was available. (Rosi 2010)

At Goroka Teachers College, Jakupa had worked alongside students making images inspired by village mythology (fig. 2.14). He continued to develop similar subject matter at the Creative Arts Centre. When he joined other artists, such as Akis, at the Centre in 1974, Jakupa’s work developed rapidly, evident in a comparison of drawings made at Goroka in 1969 with *Untitled: figures and animals* (1974) (fig. 2.15). He painted representations of village life or stories that were distinguished by flat, figurative shapes embellished with geometric patterns and bold colours. This painting shows Jakupa’s stylised composition in which repetitive design elements evoke a view of celebratory village life as the main figure wears a mask and *bilas*. Jakupa was not simply reproducing a snapshot of the costumes or decorations used in village rituals, rather his paintings were conceptual symbolisations of customary events. (Rosi 1994, 357) In *Jakupa* (1976), an exhibition catalogue, Craig described the artist and influences on his style:

> His paintings are based on the oral traditions of his people. Myths and legends told to him by his father are the sources of his inspiration. He has no interest in the ‘real’ world… He unites the self-decoration of the tribal dancers, the colours, patterns lines and forms of the insects, birds and animals of the tropical bush. His powers of observation are highly developed. He sees with microscopic vision the details of design on bush life and incorporates these into his paintings. His colours have the saturation qualities of a tropical twilight. They are as rich as his sources of inspiration… He paints what he knows – he is Jakupa. (T. Craig 1976, 2)

Although Jakupa’s images were inspired by village mythology, they were not limited by the conventions of customary designs. He depicted scenes as he envisioned them. For instance, in *Untitled* (fig. 2.15), mask and *bilas* seem to be a coat that brings the wearer into the spirit world, indicated by the rich umber colour; he is then surrounded by magical animals like the multi-legged lizard, peacock, and a figure similar to Akis’ forest spirits (fig. 2.4 right). The figure is rooted to the fertile, green ground that he stands upon; the two worlds – of the spirit and man – meet within Jakupa’s painting.

Uniting the human and spirit worlds may have been an influence from Jakupa’s mentor, Craig. Like Beier, Craig felt that an artist’s lack of formal education was a distinct
advantage because there was confidence in images and symbols that owed nothing to Western art aesthetics. (T. Craig 1976, 2) While he strove to allow students “to cultivate their own potential and ideas”, he was also required to institute standards of a tertiary arts centre, and he remained true to his objective of encouraging pride in and learning from traditional heritage to develop special skills to meet the needs of the new nation. (Rosi 1994, 141; 143-47)

Unlike artists that worked with Beier, Jakupa did not make prints until the mid-1970s when he began producing screen-prints to make more affordable works. In the early 1980s, there was an obvious shift in Jakupa’s work towards naturalism as seen in screen-prints of birds (figs. 2.16 and 2.17). The prints, made from multiple stencils, reveal his efforts to realistically depict animals. These prints were an opportunity for Jakupa to explore different themes and develop skills and techniques, while also producing art works that could be readily reproduced and would, hopefully, be marketable.

Jakupa was the only artist to have a continuous residency at the Creative Arts Centre and National Arts School that persisted even when residencies became infrequent because resources were designated for students. Rosi speculated that this was on account of Jakupa’s status as Papua New Guinea’s first artist awarded the Order of the British Empire for his services to art in 1981. (Rosi 1994, 345, 353) He remained artist in residence until 1990 when the National Art School merged with UPNG. The academic merger stated that, while the artist in residence programme would be retained, its focus would shift “to internationally recognised artists or performers rather than local village artists.” (Rosi 1994, 285, 345) It is unclear whether any new artists took up residencies or if the mandate was primarily rhetoric. Jakupa remained in Port Moresby working independently and continued to make regular trips to his home village, Meganangu.

Jakupa’s long-term residency was quite different from Akis’ or Kauage’s experiences. The residency allowed Jakupa a privileged position, mostly unaffected by the changes to the arts institutions from 1974 until 1990, and granted him access to the resources provided to students and staff without the responsibilities that accompanied that access, such as performance review or teaching. Jakupa’s residency did not provide a stipend and so his profits from exhibitions were used to pay for materials and meet living expenses. (Rosi 1994, 269) Although he stayed in Port Moresby, Jakupa remained a “village man” and returned to Meganangu several times a year. He found a balance between the worlds of village and urban existence by staying in student housing where there were strict rules to prohibit extended visits from outsiders, so that Jakupa could
legitimately avoid providing traditional hospitality to wantok. (Rosi 1994, 346) At the same time, he could freely return to his village where he honoured his customary obligations. During his residencies, Jakupa travelled to Germany (1979) and Australia (1982) for exhibitions, Vanuatu (1985) for the artist workshop at the Michoutouchkine-Pilioko Foundation (Chapter I), and Tahiti (1985) for the Pacific Arts Festival. (T. Craig 1976; P. Hereniko 1986; Rosi 1994)

**Martin Morububuna**

Martin Morububuna is from Kiriwina, the largest of the Trobriand Islands in eastern Papua New Guinea. As a boy, his artistic talents were encouraged by his grandfather, and further developed in school. (Mayer 2009) Morububuna attended high school on the main island where he got to know John Kasaipwalova, the radical Trobriand leader of Kabisawali, a politically controversial movement attempting to gain control of local government council. (Rosi 1994, 397-98) Kasaipwalova recognised Morububuna’s artistic talent and, in 1974, secured a scholarship for him to join the Creative Arts Centre. (Mayer 2009) At seventeen years old, Morububuna became the Creative Arts Centre’s youngest artist in residence.

In 1974, Georgina Beier had returned to Port Moresby and was hired by Craig to teach at the Creative Arts Centre, where Morububuna became one of her students. (Rosi 1994, 174) Under her guidance, Morububuna developed a distinctive style and participated in “very successful exhibitions and seemed to be set on a steady course.” (Mayer 2009) Morububuna’s early works at the Creative Arts Centre were stylistically based on traditional Trobriand Islands relief carving that his grandfather introduced him to which he incorporated into two-dimensional works. His technical skill and ability to arrange complex compositions was evident in the fine, flowing and interlaced lines of photo-lithographs such as *Tokasitagina* (1975) (fig. 2.18).

Although his residency seemed successful because of the strong technical development in his works and the praise from influential people like Beier, his residency was cut short when he decided to leave the Creative Arts Centre to return to the Trobriand Islands to manage Sopi Arts, an arts organisation associated with the Kabisawali movement for the revival of traditional culture. (Cochrane and Mel 1997, 60; Mayer 2009; Rosi 1994) His venture with Sopi Arts was short-lived because it closed in 1977. Consequently, Morububuna reapplied to the National Arts School where he was admitted as a student based on the recommendations of his teachers and advisors from
the Creative Arts Centre. (Eastburn 2006, 73; Rosi 1994, 402) After he returned to Port Moresby, Morububuna’s art began to focus on the shift to a national community in Papua New Guinea that followed Independence, an idea he expressed in The Young Nation of Papua New Guinea (1977) (fig. 2.19). Morububuna illustrated the concept of a national identity by combining images from different Papua New Guinean societies to create a pan-Papua New Guinean style. (Rosi 1994, 414) Although the masks and motifs are not explicitly identifiable, the bird-of-paradise47 could be seen as lifting the foremost mask onto the arrangement of joined masks that identify some of the various cultural groups that make up Papua New Guinea, thus maintaining local identities to promote a national one. The pan-Papua New Guinea theme is one that Morububuna continued to develop through his career and is evident in paintings he produced during his 2009 residency at de Young Museum (Appendix A).

While not produced during a residency, Boi (1983) (fig. 2.20) demonstrates that, as a student, Morububuna continued to develop the style influenced by Trobriand Islands relief carving of interwoven designs within the central form. Unlike Tokasitagina (fig. 2.18) in which he used series of straight and curvilinear lines to pattern the child’s body, the bird-of-paradise in Boi uses human forms as well as design motifs to create a narrative referring to a boy’s life choices. He used a single colour to emphasise the complex visual narrative centrally situated in the bird, a boy surrounded by these choices: the bird’s vertebral seems to resemble a towering citadel with ominous corridors to choose from; women fill the lower areas of the bird’s wings, on the left side, one has a male child beside her; men occupy the upper spaces in reference to the hierarchal social structure with the upper-most male wearing an ornate headdress and occupying generous space with his arms extended; and these figures are surrounded with elements like baskets of food, decorated shields, and masks which would reference responsibilities to support his family through work and cultural obligations. Morububuna carefully composed the shapes within the bird-of-paradise to create both a sense of life cycle as well as burden, as the boy contemplates his choices. This screen-print appears to be a self-reflexive narrative more than the appeal for nationalism seen in The Young Nation of Papua New Guinea (fig. 2.19), and provides an example of his efforts to depict complex themes.

47 Nearly all varieties of bird-of-paradise are found in New Guinea; its skins and feathers are used in bilas and are important commodities. The bird has an important place in traditional culture, in myths and dance performances. Its plumage is depicted on the flag of Papua New Guinea and national coat-of-arms. (Lal and Fortune 2000, 38)
Morububuna was enrolled in and then affiliated with the National Arts School from 1977 until it was absorbed into UPNG in 1990 but, from his resume available through galleries that represent him, it appears that he did not receive any specific degree. (oka’ioceanikart 2011) Eastburn reported that Morububuna lost his affiliation because he did not have the academic credentials that the university preferred for fulltime employees. However, this is another point of inconsistency since other instructors hired by the school were also trained there, such as Joe Nalo. It is probable that the issue was more complex than credentials since Morububuna wrote to Rosi remarking that he did not want to teach because he did not believe in grading art. (Rosi 1994, 412) This belief reflects the system of the residencies instituted by Beier and Craig in which artists were not critiqued according to a particular skill set. Instead, artists were encouraged to develop self-confidence and self-criticism that was fuelled by interaction with peers in a workshop-style environment.

Morububuna continued his practice independently in Port Moresby until another residency opportunity arose in 1992. The National Museum made efforts to reintroduce residencies in Port Moresby and hosted Morububuna as the inaugural artist in residence. 48 (Cochrane 2007, 75) The residency was awarded to Morububuna in 1992 and then Joe Nalo, an arts instructor at UPNG, from 1994 until 1995. After his residency, Morububuna found it difficult to maintain an independent artistic career particularly after the economic decline of the 1990s: when artistic opportunities were lacking he would return to his home in the Trobriand Islands and live as a subsistence farmer. (oka’ioceanikart 2011)

Morububuna’s residency at the Creative Arts Centre was brief compared to Jakupa’s. This can probably be attributed to his involvement in the Kabisawali political movement that drew him back to the Trobriand Islands in 1974. Nevertheless, during his residency at the Creative Arts Centre he established a style based on Trobriand Islands traditions, which he continued to develop as student at the National Arts School. In 2011, Morububuna continues to work there independently at his home studio in Port Moresby. (Rosi 2010)

48 Although I contacted the museum and requested information about the residency programme, the staff did not provide information but it seems that the museum was attempting to fill the void left by the discontinuation of the National Arts School’s residencies for local artists.
Within this chapter, cultural exchange intersects with social development because self-governance propelled a drive towards a national culture and identity, and the timing of the residencies coincided with the initiation of the campaign. Both cultural exchange and social commentary were significant outcomes of the residencies: cultural exchange occurred amongst artists from diverse cultural backgrounds when they converged on Port Moresby, and social commentary was communicated through the art works that optimistically envisioned or critiqued nationalism while still retaining a deep appreciation of the diverse traditions and cultures throughout the country. Cultural exchange was a part of Beier’s and Craig’s agendas. Craig clearly stated the Creative Art Centre’s objective to maintain cultural values and transform the potential disadvantage of the political transition to advantage so that Papua New Guineans could “rediscover their roots.” (T. Craig 1976) For example, Morububuna connected with Trobriand Islands relief carving, Aihi drew on Roro tattooing, while Kauage and Jakupa used bilas to refer to cultural customs.

Prior to independence, Papua New Guineans related to local identities that changed from village to village: fostering a sense of nationalism to encourage patriotism was prompted by and reactive to the political movement towards independence. Although the majority of contemporary art practice was in Port Moresby, the artists came from different parts of the country, and so their art work referenced different locations, histories, and customs symbolic of the range throughout Papua New Guinea. Residencies, particularly those initiated by Craig at the Creative Arts Centre became a place where pan-Papua New Guinean identity was explored and depicted through visual art works. Craig “considered it imperative for future political development that young Papua New Guineans be taught respect for traditional village life and skills.” (Rosi 1994, 120) He felt cultural knowledge was essential for artists to create imagery that reflected the dynamism of Papua New Guinean cultures and the artist community, beyond just artists in residence, found that their works were adopted as symbols of the transitional nature of Papua New Guinean society at the time.

This movement of artists such as Jakupa and Morububuna, between Port Moresby and their home villages was important to maintain strong ties to family and village obligations. For Jakupa, for example, it inspired him to paint imagery that incorporated village mythology and creatures found in the bush. (Rosi 1994, 147) The exchange was reciprocal. Artists drew inspiration from village life and the sale of their art
works contributed to the local economy because artists reinvested earnings in their home villages. Apart from Akis, these artists did not practise in the village, but rather maintained separate lives: a career in Port Moresby and a life of maintaining customary obligations in the village. As Akis’ experience revealed, over time their careers became accepted as money became more valued within the villages. However, there is no evidence that artists could survive without professional connections in Port Moresby, where most commercial opportunities were to be found. This balance was important for the artists to retain kinship connections, while also satisfying their artistic aspirations. It created a unique exchange as traditional village lifestyles fuelled artistic production in Port Moresby, where audiences sought images of rural lifestyles as emblematic of the nation’s cultural resilience and diversity, and then the ensuing profits were reinvested to modernise those same rural villages.

Morububuna’s work captures his efforts to balance local (home village) and national (Port Moresby), to make his work relevant to and representative of Papua New Guinea. Beier quoted the artist’s mode of representation as “bung wantaim” or bringing different people together. (Ningini Arts 2010)

When I paint in my bung wantaim style, I am showing not only my background but what is happening to PNG. I am trying to bring it all together – the people, the many lifestyles brought about by modernisation, our rich traditions. You can recognise my work… But this is not just my style, it’s everybody’s… Papua New Guinean, tasoll (that’s all). (Morububuna in Ningini Arts 2010)

By mixing together images of Papua New Guineans from different geographic areas and cultural backgrounds and combining naturalistic forms with traditional abstract designs he created a style which he considered pan-Papua New Guinean. (Rosi 1994, 415) For example, The Young Nation of Papua New Guinea (fig. 2.19) combined symbols such as masks, shields, and animals from various parts of the country to record local styles that symbolised the roots of Papua New Guinea’s dynamic and diverse cultures. While there was still evidence of his early style that was derived from Trobriand Islands relief carving, Morububuna added features to create an image that bursts forth from darkness with ray-like accents around the confluence of symbols intended to represent a pan-Papua New Guinean identity.

Fever of Milamala: from Planting to Harvest to Farewell of the Spirits (fig. 2.21) was produced during the 2009 de Young Museum residency (Appendix A) yet Morububuna first developed the subject matter and composition in 1985 in a mural at Mila Mala Market, Port Moresby. Although I was unable to find images of the original mural, Rosi
provided a description, which when compared to *Fever of Milamala*, confirms that he redeveloped these ideas. Morububuna utilised colour symbolism traditionally used in the Trobriand Islands; for example, he used yellow to convey joy and hopefulness. (Mayer 2009) The celebrants come forward with satisfied smiles, joyful because of a successful harvest of yam and tapioca. Spirits hover over the festive crowd, representative of deities that bestowed plentiful harvests. Mayer explained that “Milamala marks the end and the beginning of the cycle of life.” (Mayer 2009) Painting scenes that related to traditions and lifestyle in the villages was Morububuna’s way of relaying his belief that the culture of the village can bring stability and help make sense of the often precarious political and social realities of urban life in Papua New Guinea. In his own words, “Our village customs are important for our identity.” (Rosi 1994, 407)

Narokobi pointed out: “It is extremely important to note that practically all contemporary artists hail from the villages and are deeply rooted in village values.” (2005, 166) Jakupa was known for a ‘village’ aesthetic. For example, *Biipela Man* (1978) (fig. 2.22) displays qualities of Bena Bena cultural traditions through the rich and colourful *bilas*, including traditional costumes, body paint, and tattoo, that adorn the central male figure and flanking females. In the upper left corner is the men’s house, where all ceremonial activities, decision making, and initiation rites were conceived and organised in Bena Bena and many parts of Papua New Guinea. Artists’ identification with village lifestyles and values theoretically made the art work accessible to a range of Papua New Guinean audiences, as opposed to other images of Port Moresby where Western influences permeated society. Nevertheless, the reality was that rural audiences did not have access to the art works, nor did most need the affirmation of cultural dynamism since inspiration came from other forms of creative expression in daily life in the villages. The appreciation of paintings or prints depicting “deeply rooted” cultural traditions from the villages was connected to its use as a kind of propaganda by those in the capital striving to promote a national identity that did not expunge local identities. The range of artists from different parts of the country – Highlands, Waima, Trobriand Islands – provided an array of cultural references that became representative of their local identities in the melting pot of Port Moresby.

The celebration of national identity was encouraged by the institutions and patrons of the arts. As government-funded institutions, the objectives of the Creative Arts Centre and then the National Arts School were:

First to stimulate in young contemporary artists a sense of national consciousness and personhood; second, to create innovative expressive objects, symbols, and
dramatic performances which would objectify and represent dimensions of national culture and identity; third, to develop a public sphere for contemporary PNG art to engage audience participation in the artistic process and link the latter to capitalist production. (Rosi 1994, 546)

These objectives indicate that these institutions were actively encouraging artists to produce images of a national identity. Craig recognised this in his description of the working environment that sought to cultivate an articulation of Papua New Guinean identity:

It is hoped that in such an environment, where formal teaching is kept to a minimum; where art is regarded as an activity and an attitude of mind – not a discipline to be learned – where traditional skills mingle with modern technology; there will develop a form of contemporary expression which is genuinely Papua New Guinean. (T. Craig 1976, 4; Eastburn 2006, 52)

Craig’s comments described the early days of the Creative Arts Centre when residencies were the primary mode of supporting artists and support the notion that contemporary art was adopted by government, which funded these institutions to meet its political goals of fostering a national identity.

The idea that the government co-opted the artistic movement to complement its own strategies prompts me to consider the Beiers’ political directives and how they related to artistic development. Ulli and Georgina Beier had catalytic roles in both Nigeria and Papua New Guinea promoting contemporary artistic expression to ‘discover’ a national identity and to aid in developing qualities they believed made art meaningful for the artist. Their aims may have been driven by an essentialist attitude towards indigenous expression rather than overtly political goals; nevertheless they played a role in shaping the arts produced. While Georgina Beier’s activities were a personally funded venture that intended to encourage self-determination, some of her comments indicate a prescribed and interventionist approach. For example, she described the process of supporting artists’ development: “[It] is not simply a matter of providing materials and ‘encouragement’ and letting anything happen. It is like hunting for the original element, trapping it and making it safe, before it gets confused with so many other, alien elements.” (G. Beier and Tröger 2001, 122) The manner in which she established an exclusive programme for those she decided to work with was her right as an independent sponsor, but prompts me to query whether it perpetuated a colonial agenda, as art collector and author Hugh Stevenson wrote, “The 1970’s and 1980’s may eventually be seen as an aberrant period in the development of Papua New Guinean art, with its structures established as a last act of cultural colonialism.” (Simons, Stevenson, and Perc
While I do not believe that Stevenson was directly referring to Beier, the reference is fitting when considering the comments made by an artist working in Port Moresby in the 1970s raised earlier in this chapter. The artist noted that Beier was not trusted by the majority of the community because it was thought that she influenced artists’ styles and their artistic development was at odds with the natural evolution of other visual artists whose work transitioned from customary to modern or non-traditional urban art. (Artist working in Papua New Guinea 2011)

Stevenson referred to the complex situation in which contemporary art was introduced as a release for the creative energies that expatriates, like Beier, felt had been repressed by the colonial experience. (H. Stevenson 1995, 48) Kasfir described the complications of this sequence of stimulus in reference to workshops in Nigeria,

a highly integrated [indigenous] culture which is destroyed by the civilising process – in this case represented by the colonial experience… Colonialism then becomes a kind of bondage from which the workshop artist breaks free. But ironically the particular brand of consciousness required to set this in motion (and more importantly, the contacts and resources) must inevitably come from the colonising culture. (1999, 50)

In Papua New Guinea, artists from the erstwhile colonising culture instituted programmes that were intended to liberate creative individuals from the conditions of colonialism. This progression then supports Stevenson’s doubts about the benefits of the developments in art during the 1970s.

From a Papua New Guinean perspective, Narokobi praised the artistic representations of new nationalism that utilised modern materials. He wrote: “It is a heart and soul expression of what is deep within… our contemporary artists will pass into history as our artists, our visionaries… Our art should be seen and enjoyed and our artists appreciated for what they are and not for what or whom they resemble.” (Simons, Stevenson, and Perc Tucker Regional Art Gallery 1990, 20-21) The two perspectives, the former of an Australian art collector and author as opposed to the latter of a Papua New Guinean politician, writer, and advocate for arts underscore the complexities around the introduction of visual art practices by Europeans in Papua New Guinea. Narokobi’s perspective accentuates the dynamism of artistic development and cultural expression because they absorb and reflect influences and changes. It was inevitable that the colonising culture influenced the development of contemporary arts but it combined with local customs and styles that should, as Narokobi asserted, be appreciated for the unique product that is a consequence of the influences. Papua New Guinean artists used the materials and techniques to reflect their own world, which was, however, itself a
confluence of Papua New Guinean and Western/European. Narokobi affirmed the success of this combination: “Let us first use modern in techniques, if we must, but only to enhance our uniqueness and identity.” (Lewis-Harris 2004, 274)

Artist residencies were more akin to traditional modes of collective learning such as apprenticeships and encouraged a support system to foster trust between artists from diverse backgrounds to establish a sense of national community within the arts institutions. It is because of these direct efforts that Papua New Guinean contemporary art in the 1970s became symbolic of national identity. Artist residencies facilitated the interactions of artists and created a space for cultural exchange.

**Social and economic development**

As a conduit for creative individuals to establish themselves as visual artists, residencies activated economic opportunities for artists, which were, in turn, linked to artists’ social status. Akis’ experience between two worlds illustrates how artists used their career to garner status in both the village and the capital. Akis was dependent on leaving Tsembaga to produce art and sell it, which in turn enabled him to meet customary kinship obligations in the village and pay for traditional presentations of pigs, cloth, beads, and, eventually, money. He reinvested his earnings beyond his familial obligations; for instance, he paid for local boys to attend missionary school. (Rosi 1994, 296) Ultimately, Akis’ annual residencies helped change village attitudes towards contemporary visual art when wantok saw how his career was contributing to village development.

In the capital, his inventive art works made him immensely popular and, combined with sell-out exhibitions, brought him status associated with modern life. Akis’ annual residencies were imperative for sustaining his career because they provided access to resources via the host, Beier or the Creative Arts Centre, and recognition associated with the designation ‘artist in residence.’ This was particularly important as more emerging artists chose academic routes and acquired qualifications. But only an exclusive group were offered residencies, and this imported terminology gained meaning in Papua New Guinea over the years and became an esteemed title for artists.

Akis understood how to make the most of the available market. He accommodated his audience’s desire for narratives by including descriptive texts with his drawings. Many European visitors viewed Papua New Guinea art as ‘primitive’ and expected it to be illustrative or narrative and refer to customary or traditional life and
values. (G. Beier 1974, 2) Therefore, they would continually ask Akis for the story behind his art works. Beier recalled that, often, those tourists would not accept that there were no stories behind the imagery, that Akis might simply invent a cassowary with two heads and so they would press him to tell a story of how the imagery connected to a ritual or legend. (U. Beier 2005, 75) Beier went onto explain that although the images were Akis’ own invention, he did not want to disappoint potential patrons (or perhaps did not want to explain himself to those who had already made up their minds) and would make up stories to satisfy his audience. (U. Beier 2005, 75) Eventually, Akis began including descriptive text to accompany the art works; they were written in Pidgin or occasionally English. While not all of his clients would have demanded definitions, Beier’s comment suggests that Akis was not as concerned with transforming tourists’ preconceived perceptions as he was with selling art works. This is a reflection of the limited arts market that was primarily driven by tourism and foreigners working in Port Moresby. Port Moresby did not have any art galleries during the first few years of Akis’ career, and there were no established professional standards for selling art work. It appears that the training provided by the Beiers and Craig focused on practice not management because they facilitated sales and exhibitions on behalf of the artists.

In early 1969, Akis’ designs were also printed onto kaftans, dresses, lap-lap (Pidgin for sarong or pareu), and shirts that became “the height of fashion among expatriate staff on the university campus.” (R. Bulmer quoted in U. Beier 2005, 73) This is another example of how Akis balanced creative expression and commercial realities. When the success of Akis’ fabric designs proved there was a market for printed textiles, Beier established Hara Hara Prints with the intention that the business was to be owned and run by a Papua New Guinean. She hired Aihi to run the business in 1969; however, a single woman running a business brought strong criticism, which combined with other pressures from Aihi’s village took its toll on Aihi who left Port Moresby after a brief career. While Aihi’s residency and subsequent business endeavour demonstrates that Beier tried to encourage female artists in what was a male dominated arts scene, it also raises the question of whether Beier understood the social restrictions on women. Beier would have been aware of Papua New Guinean attitudes towards women, but did she believe her support as a European would allow Aihi to circumvent social conventions and criticism of independent endeavours of Papua New Guinean women? There were social and cultural thresholds that could not be circumvented, as Aihi’s experience
reveals. Referring to the recent phase of contemporary art in Papua New Guinea (1990 to 2007), art historian Jacquelyn Lewis-Harris wrote: “More artists are starting to appear on the art scene. Even though the social restrictions have not relaxed, women artists are better educated and more prepared to enter the art market.” (Lewis-Harris 2008, 3) An example of this is Elisabet Kauage who did not exhibit or sell work independently until after her husband’s death in 2003.

These examples exemplify how residencies operated in relation to the growth of creative industries. The residencies not only provided access to workspace, materials, exhibitions, and introduction to patrons, but in the 1970s and 1980s created opportunities for select artists to maintain careers by providing employment, such as decorating the interior and exterior of new government buildings and other government commissions allocated to artists affiliated with the National Arts School for sculptures, murals, and paintings. These opportunities were directly linked to the government’s investment and funding and further highlight the government’s use of contemporary art to convey political aspirations. Therefore, when commissions ceased after the decorations were completed and when the government cut arts funding due to the nation’s economic decline in the late 1980s, artists suffered because they had become accustomed to the financial benefits associated with residencies and commissions from the government. Another factor that affected the artists was fewer foreign consultants working in Port Moresby due to the increase of hiring Papua New Guinean staff who were being educated within the tertiary institutions.

In a local newspaper article published in 1989, Jakupa charged the government with ignoring artists’ needs: “I have tried approaching the National Culture Council and the Department of Culture and Tourism for a grant or even a letter of reference but my requests have fallen on deaf ears.” (Jakupa Ako quoted in Rosi 1994, 269) Morububuna expressed a similar sentiment to Rosi in 1988 about his financial difficulties as a result of the nation’s deepening fiscal crisis:

49 A difficult issue to adequately address here is that of women artists, or more correctly the lack of women artists, involved in residencies in Papua New Guinea. Prominent women artists from Papua New Guinea have gained international attention, such as Mathias Kauage’s wife Elisabet Kauage and Wendi Choulai. Wendi Choulai was the first woman to complete a degree in her chosen field in 1986 from the National Arts School; Jacquelyn Lewis-Harris describes Choulai’s work as “highly personal and expressive, illustrating and glorifying her clan’s culture while wryly illustrating and commenting upon [Papua New Guinea’s] urban environment.” (2008) Choulai was very successful, and was included in the 1996 Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art in Brisbane, Australia. However, this does not affect the disproportionate proportion of male to female artists in residence included in this chapter, as Choulai emerged long after Aihi. While Aihi’s experience of being criticised for her independent success as an artist reveals the attitudes that might have hindered other women artists, it does not justify the disproportion. Since contemporary visual artists are the focus of this thesis, I have not elaborated on the prominent role that women have in the production and sale of fibre and textile arts, which are prominent in the tourist market.

50 The role of women in Papua New Guinea continues to be an issue and was responded to by artists in an exhibition at the National Library entitled, “Re-Thinking Women in PNG” (May 2011) in Port Moresby. The exhibition was intended to rethink the roles of women and challenge the stereotypes of how they are portrayed.
I and the other artists are still struggling through the ignorances [stet] of the politicians, and I hope that one day the National Cultural Council and the [National Arts School] will be able to recognise what we are. It is sad for us, at this point in time, that neither the [National Arts School] nor (the Department of) Cultural Tourism considers we are part of them at all. They talk about culture, but financial support and common understanding is not there for us. We are lost. We don’t know where we fit in – the top or the bottom – I can’t say. (Rosi 1994, 412)

These sentiments from Jakupa and Morububuna express disappointment at a lack of continued support for Papua New Guinean artists. In 1989 and 1990, the National Art School “operated in a continual state of crisis as staff positions were frozen and utilities and supplies were cut off.” (B. Craig 1996; Rosi 1994, 412) The relatively swift peak of government investment in arts seems to have been particularly detrimental to those visual artists that launched careers in the early and mid-1970s because soon after they entered the field it appeared as though the government was able to financially support them through residency stipends, scholarships, and then commissions, and became dependent upon them. However, the equally sharp economic decline revealed the uncertain reality that most emerging artists face. Contemporary visual artists were not the only ones who suffered but their newfound profession was dependent on sales with money (as opposed to customary exchange) because they had to purchase supplies to produce drawings, prints, and paintings.

As residencies became less available in Port Moresby, artists became more reliant on commercial opportunities. The majority of exhibition spaces were at UPNG, the National Arts School, and National Museum. Since there were no permanent commercial dealer galleries in Port Moresby, artists sold their work independently. Kauage’s production workshop is an example of individual enterprise outside of the residencies. By training his family to complete and reproduce art in his style, Kauage was able to direct his attention towards marketing and selling his work around Port Moresby. While the circumstances of the workshop were similar to Beier’s studio in earlier days, the goals were quite different. Therefore, I have not considered it a residency because its primary goal was business as much as it was a place for the creation of art works. In 1986, Morububuna also established an arts business called Sai Arts but there was not enough work or clientele available in Port Moresby to maintain the business. (Rosi 1994, 412) In 1988, Morububuna confirmed that the era of residencies in Port Moresby was a golden age and remarked that he would like to see the National Arts School return to being the Creative Arts Centre. (Rosi 1994, 412)
Chapter Summary

The rise of residencies in Papua New Guinea was directly related to the country’s move towards self-governance and the subsequent government investment in the arts. Although it is arguable whether Georgina Beier and Tom Craig had personal political agendas, nation-building priorities in education brought expatriate professionals and consultants like Ulli Beier to train Papua New Guineans towards self-reliance. This led to the establishment of the tertiary art institutions and provided Craig with an opportunity to play a founding role in the Creative Arts Centre and National Arts School in Port Moresby.

The emergence of a contemporary art scene in Port Moresby brought art into the daily consciousness of the capital. Iwano Masako’s question, related to Japanese residencies, is relevant here:

If encounters with art and artists become part of daily life in a small rural community, and if aesthetic experiences are perceived by its local residents as part of their daily lives, what kinds of humanistic, cultural, and social change take place in the community and in the people involved? (Masako 2003, 114)

This is relevant to Papua New Guinea where, before initiatives by the Beiers and Craig, contemporary arts were practised but did not convey the professional status that became associated with residencies. Contemporary visual arts were associated with foreigners but became an important social, political, and economic commodity in Port Moresby during the transition to self-governance. The artist residencies described here supported the growth of contemporary art in Papua New Guinea in a way that allowed mature and young artists to develop their skills without the pressures of academic prerequisites. This was initially maintained through patronage by the expatriate population, visitors to Port Moresby, and government support. The change in the contemporary arts community from expatriates to indigenous artists became evident in Port Moresby and in the international arts arena where Papua New Guinean artists were appreciated for innovative and distinctive contemporary styles, different from common ‘primitive’ associations with Papua New Guinean artefacts, such as Sepik carvings or masks, in European museums.

In Port Moresby’s art community there was a simultaneous unification of and division between local and national; in other words, some artists were forced to live
between two worlds. As Narokobi pointed out, many prominent artists were strongly connected to their villages, but when they became artists, their relationship with the village changed as the modernist concept of art, promoted by their mentors, asserted that art was individualistic, thus requiring distance from the responsibilities (and constraints) of communal culture and customary obligations. For Akis and Jakupa, the two worlds complemented one another because village life provided inspiration while urban life provided funds to reinvest in the village.

Although the majority of contemporary art practice was in Port Moresby, artists came from different parts of the country, and so their art work referenced different locations, histories, and customs throughout Papua New Guinea. Residencies, particularly those initiated by Craig at the Creative Arts Centre, became a place where pan-Papua New Guinean identity was explored and depicted through visual art works. But this did not reject local knowledge. Craig “considered it imperative for future political development that young Papua New Guineans be taught respect for traditional village life and skills.” (Rosi 1994, 120) He felt that was essential for artists to create imagery that reflected the dynamism of Papua New Guinean cultures. This highlights the value of having the residencies in Papua New Guinea rather than in Australia, for instance, because it seems unlikely that the artists included in this case study would have been able to participate in such training, or would have even considered undertaking a residency outside the country. Establishing the residencies in the country also helped increase interest in contemporary visual arts that has inspired artists like Waswas to pursue the career.

Daniel Waswas wrote about the generation of artists before him and commended the format and function of residencies:

they do not meet the academic requirement according to the Western form of introduced training. Although they do posses the traditional values and skills that qualifies them to teach in the context of PNG culture that were passed on from generation to generation. [Morububuna and others] have the credentials and experience in understanding the Western form of interpreting art whilst establishing balance with their heritage to fit into today’s trend of art movement. I think our education system should consider offering mentorship to artists of this calibre to share and pass on their wealth of experience for the benefit of the young students. This will prepare them and enable them to increase their level of awareness on their heritage and will have a comprehensive understanding and balance with the many cultures in PNG along with the introduced cultures of the West. (Waswas in Eastburn 2006, 88)

This combined foundation in traditional values and affinity for contemporary artistic expression was fundamental to the success of the pioneering Papua New Guinean artists.
The evolution of residencies in Port Moresby highlights the potential of such programmes to foster arts in the community. The breakdown of the programmes demonstrates that while some residencies can commence with minimal financial resources, substantial investment of human and financial resources are necessary to provide continued support for growing arts communities.
CHAPTER III: ADOPTION AND ADAPTATION OF AN ARTIST RESIDENCY – THE UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC AND THE OCEANIA CENTRE FOR ARTS AND CULTURE IN FIJI

Introduction

There have been two residency programmes at the University of the South Pacific (USP) in Fiji. The first, from 1974 to 1977, was administered by the Extension Services department and the other, 1997 to present, is administered by the Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture. The latter residencies are the primary focus of this case study because they were devised and directed by Epeli Hau’ofa as a means of encouraging a style of contemporary Oceanic arts production that would reflect Oceanic epistemologies, cultures, history, and contemporary life.

I briefly consider the university’s first artist residencies during the 1970s as a preface to those at the Oceania Centre. Albert Wendt facilitated the majority of residencies in the 1970s after he joined USP in 1974 as assistant director of extension services and senior lecturer in education. Detailed evaluation of the Oceania Centre’s artist residencies is limited to Hau’ofa’s tenure (1997-2009). I describe the associations between his writing and the development of the centre’s programmes. \(^{51}\) Five artists’ residency experiences – four long-term residents and one visiting artist, as well as reference to other visiting artists’ experiences, are analysed to evaluate the artists’ practice and how the residencies provided training and professional development opportunities. I also evaluate Hau‘ofa’s method of fostering a protective space that was intended to affirm and safeguard artistic practices rooted in Oceanic epistemologies but had negative implications because of its idealistic nature. One of the reasons for the negative implications is that Hau'ofa had no experience with visual or performing arts prior to his appointment as director. Instead, he based directives on his academic writings that described Oceania as an immense, far-reaching “sea of islands” that could evoke confidence and strength in ‘Oceanians’ and his desire for artists to produce imagery representative of those ideas. \(^{2008b}; Hau'ofa et al. 1993\) His goal was similar to and inspired by the way that contemporary Papua New Guinean art became representative of the independent nation in the 1970s. Consequently, he based the residency model at the Oceania Centre on those from Papua New Guinea with the expectation that emulation of the programmes would produce equivalent results.

\(^{51}\) The Oceania Centre hosts the Red Wave Collective for visual artists, the Oceania Dance Theatre, and Newsounds Oceania music group and production studio.
Hau'ofa’s motivations were not nationalistic, rather his objective was to foster a movement of contemporary Oceanic art that looked to the ancestors to inspire empowered visions of the present.

This chapter analyses the ways that the Oceania Centre supported the development of contemporary art through artist residencies rather than formal courses in a typical art school fashion. Artist residencies at the Oceania Centre functioned as a collaborative arts workshop. As in Papua New Guinea, ‘residency’ was the terminology employed by Hau'ofa, most likely to qualify it as a career-building endeavour for participants since they did not receive academic qualifications and the residency style does not resemble common or conventional formats. Rather, the Oceania Centre’s residencies were modelled after those in Papua New Guinea because Hau'ofa was inspired by Georgina Beier’s residencies and he invited Georgina and Ulli Beier to advise him during the establishment of the centre in 1997. Residencies at the Oceania Centre provide opportunities to evaluate a programme without specific objectives or residency durations for the artists. While the programme lacked training or production-based strategies, it provided a base for a number of visual artists to maintain a career that may not have been possible without the centre’s resources. Therefore, this case study provides another unconventional but long-lasting example of residency programme in the region.

There were two types of residencies at the Oceania Centre: visiting artists in residence and long-term artists in residence. Visiting artists held what I have described as short-term residencies in which they travelled to Fiji, stayed for a definitive period, several weeks to months, produced art work in the shared studio space alongside long-term artists in residence, and conducted workshops and/or participated in group exhibitions. Some visiting artists were invited by Hau’ofa because of the knowledge and skills they could share with local artists; they were expected to conduct art workshops for local artists and were often funded by the centre. Other visiting artists requested an invitation from Hau’ofa, often because they were conducting research at the university or independently. Those artists were not provided funding but were invited to conduct workshops. Long-term residencies were the foundation of the centre’s programmes, lasted from several months to more than ten years, and provided both training and professional opportunities for artists. Long-term residencies, like those at the Creative Arts Centre in Port Moresby, were an alternative to academic options.

The experiences of four long-term artists in residence are the central focus of this chapter: Peni Saimone ‘Ben’ Fong (1997-present), Josua Toganivalu (1998-2005), Josaia
McNamara (2000-2009), and Mason Lee (2000-2008). Two artists joined the centre in its first few months; Fong has remained while Toganivalu left to pursue academic training and teach. Their experiences, as sculptor and painter respectively, provide an important example of artistic development by those with no prior experience with visual arts. As the only metal sculptor in residence, Fong developed his practice independently; whereas Toganivalu’s art illustrates the centre’s method of encouraging imitation as an artist’s first means of learning techniques and styles. McNamara joined the centre in 2000 but had been painting in contemporary, abstract styles since late 1990s. During his long-term residency, he was awarded a Commonwealth Connections International Artist Residency (2008), which demonstrates how the Oceania Centre could provide training and guidance for artists to achieve prestigious opportunities. Moreover, McNamara is an example of an artist that understood and found inspiration in Hau’ofa’s ambiguous aspiration for an Oceanic identity, which provided a valuable point of reference for disentangling the artistic aspirations for visual artists at the Oceania Centre. In contrast, my fourth example, Lee developed his practice during the residency but recognised that he had to leave the Oceania Centre to take his career to the next level. These four artists’ experiences reveal different approaches to their practice and diverse views of the role and function of residencies at the Oceania Centre. While only a small proportion of the Oceania Centre’s long-term artists in residence, they offer a multifaceted perspective of the residencies and are instructive in relation to the main issues presented throughout this thesis. These studies are bolstered by descriptions and evaluations of John Pule’s experiences as a short-term artist in residence (1998, 2001, 2006). I also refer to Filipe Tohi’s (2006, 2007) visits to the Oceania Centre.

Paralleling the emphasis on Beier and Craig within the Papua New Guinea case study, Hau’ofa features prominently throughout this case study, and his notion of Oceanic expression in the centre’s programmes is fundamental to an analysis of the paradigm of cultural exchange. This cultural premise influenced artistic production at the centre, as I suggest through analyses of the artists’ experiences and the dynamics of artistic production amongst long-term artists in residence at the Oceania Centre. Finally, I use the paradigm of social and economic development to evaluate the role of the Red Wave Collective and consider how the long-term residencies affected artists’ social and economic circumstances.
In 1998, the Oceania Centre’s visual artists formed the Red Wave Collective under Hau’ofa’s direction. The Red Wave Collective’s role was to strengthen collegiality amongst the visual artists and establish a designation under which they would exhibit. Artists in residence were obliged to be part of the collective but the group was not limited to artists holding residencies. Artists that participated in art workshops or former artists in residence were invited to exhibit with the collective. Hau’ofa facilitated all of the Red Wave Collective’s participation in exhibitions and events within and outside of the Oceania Centre.

Following Hau’ofa’s death in 2009, USP’s Pacific Studies department joined the Oceania Centre to form the Oceania Centre for Arts, Culture and Pacific Studies. Hau’ofa worked towards holding off such integration throughout his tenure because he was philosophically opposed to formal training for fostering contemporary Oceanic art. In August 2010, playwright, filmmaker, and former director of the Centre for Pacific Studies at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, Vilsoni Hereniko took on the directorship of the Oceania Centre for Arts, Culture and Pacific Studies. Hereniko’s leadership brought significant changes to the Oceania Centre not only because of the incorporation of academic courses, but because, unlike Hau’ofa, Hereniko arrived with a range of experience in the arts. He wrote the monograph *Art in the New Pacific* (1979), *Polynesian Clowns and Satirical Comedies* (1990) a PhD dissertation and book analysing Rotuman clowns and satirical performances, and wrote, directed, and produced the film *The Land Has Eyes* (2004). Hereniko has retained the residency programmes as a means of supporting visual artists at the Oceania Centre, but, I do not evaluate changes to the centre’s programmes in this case study because, at the time of writing, they are still in the

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52 The name comes from the Fijian *buah kula* or Tongan *peau kula* meaning tidal wave or literally ‘red wave’. Metaphorically, this name refers to the change from customary styles into the contemporary visual art forms produced at the centre. In *Art and Life in Melanesia* (2007) Cochrane wrote “the coup d’état led by George Speight galvanised a loose group of indigenous Fijian artists at the Centre for Oceanic Arts and Culture into forming the Red Wave Collective.” (Cochrane 2007, 157) However, the Red Wave was established in 1998, two years before Speight’s coup d’état. Cochrane’s information also conflicts with Hau’ofa’s essays and presentations about the origins of the collective as well as several of my interviews with Hau’ofa and three of the original members during which I specifically asked about its origins. (Fong 2006; Hau’ofa 2008a; Toganivalu 2006; Vaka’uta 2006)

53 In 2007, Hau’ofa appointed senior artist Lingikoni Vaka’uta as visual arts coordinator. In that position, Vaka’uta took responsibilities and management of the Red Wave Collective.

54 In 2006, the Oceania Centre’s non-academic programmes were integrated with the university’s academic departments when it was incorporated into the School of Islands and Oceans. The School of Islands and Oceans, part of the Faculty of Science, Technology and Environment, includes Geography, Land Management, Environment, and Marine Studies departments. The Oceania Centre’s website described this merger as having “almost destroyed it, for instance by allowing the reduction of its 2008 operational funding by more than ninety per cent.” (Oceania Centre for Arts Culture and Pacific Studies 2010)

55 Based on myths, proverbs, and perspectives of Rotumans as well as the experiences of the writer and director, *The Land Has Eyes* illustrates post-colonial social issues, such as Westernisation and cultural identity. It was filmed entirely on Rotuma.
preliminary stages. It is also important to note that, beginning in 2009, the majority of artists presented in this chapter had left the Oceania Centre to pursue their artistic endeavours independently or with other arts organisations in Suva. The years 1997-2009 thus provide a cohesive study.

It is necessary to preface analysis of artist residencies at the Oceania Centre by acknowledging that the majority of long-term artists in residence have been male. That Marie Taita Aihi was the only female artist included in the previous chapter is a reflection of prevalent attitudes towards women’s roles in Papua New Guinean society at the time of independence. In contrast, many female artists have started their artistic careers as short-term artists in residence or participants of workshops at the Oceania Centre including New Zealand-based visual artists Ema Tavola and Sangeeta Singh, as well as performing artist and convenor of Pacific Studies at Australia National University, Dr. Katerina Teaiwa. Moreover, in 2009, educator, poet, and visual artist Frances Cresantia Koya, who has been associated with the Oceania Centre since its early years while attending and then teaching at USP, was appointed interim director. However, the participation of these prominent women does not negate the fact that there has been criticism of the Oceania Centre because the majority of artists are male.\(^{56}\) There have been at least six female visiting artists to the centre; two were funded by the centre – New Zealand-based Rotuman/Scottish Sofia Tekela-Smith (2001) and South African Marita Brodie\(^{57}\) (2005), while English Tui Clery (2006-2008) and Americans Holly Gittlein (2006) and myself (2006, 2007) were funded from other sources. Although the number of visiting artists is unclear, it seems that there have been more female visiting artists than male.

The reasons for the gender imbalances I have described are not clear, and it is not my chief concern to engage with this issue here because it is not directly pertinent to my central themes. An example of efforts to counteract the imbalance is Vasu, a collective of female artists in Fiji, established in 2007 to “champion women’s development… [and promote] women’s various expressions and concerns about all kinds of things… to enable more women to take control of their own lives and imagination

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\(^{56}\) One example of this is at the Indigenous Epistemologies conference at USP in 2006, Ema Tavola asked the panel of male artists about boundaries for female artists practising at the Oceania Centre. (Tavola 2006) Sculptor and technician Ben Fong responded confidently, “We’ve had female artists who have come and gone at the centre, … you would know since you have gone through the centre [that] females have come through… and continued on… gone abroad. [We’ve] had very good comments on [their] works.” (Fong 2006)

\(^{57}\) Marita Brodie was born in South Africa but she has lived in Fiji since 1979. Therefore, the costs were nominal to sponsor Brodie as a visiting artist in residence, although she lives several hours from Suva.
and share their experiences with one another as well as with other women in the region as well as globally.” (Tarte et al. 2008, 8) Vasu is not affiliated with the Oceania Centre but a number of Vasu artists have exhibited with the Red Wave Collective include Sangeeta Singh, Ann Tarte, Alisa Vavataga, Julie Fakaia, Mereoni Mataika, Ema Tavola, Luisa Tora, Vitalina Namola and Dulcie Stewart. (Tarte et al. 2008, 10) The group exhibition, Vasu: Pacific Women of Power (2008), was shown at the Oceania Centre and Fiji Museum, and a selection of works toured to Fresh Gallery Otara, Manukau, New Zealand in 2009.

This chapter is informed by interviews and research conducted while I was a visiting artist to the Oceania Centre and through follow-up interviews. 58 During my visits, all of the artists in residence were male. Female artists were employed by the centre and practiced there on semi-regular basis, but since they were not actually artists in residence, their work is not included here. I have also drawn background information for this case study from essays and presentations by Hau‘ofa as well as conversations and correspondence with him. Although literature on the Oceania Centre is limited, there have been several articles that refer to the art produced there written by academics outside of USP. (Cochrane 2000, 2005; V. Hereniko 2006; Jolly 2007; Watanabe 2010; Whimp 2008)

**Locating the University of the South Pacific**

Fiji’s central location has made it a strategic base for shipping, airlines, and telecommunications, which, in turn, benefits the main industries of tourism, agriculture, 59 and regional institutions like USP and Secretariat of the Pacific Community. Fiji’s more than 320 islands and islets include two main islands Vanua Levu and Viti Levu. In 1871, Cakobau and other tribal leaders made efforts to unite the separate chiefdoms throughout the islands. Their efforts were unsuccessful and, in 1874, Fiji became a colony of Great Britain until 1970 when an independent government was elected with Queen Elizabeth II as head of state. (Crocombe 2001, 691) In 1974, Fiji became a sovereign nation within the Commonwealth of Nations, until membership was suspended in 2009 as a result of the coup d’etat that began in 2006. (Commonwealth Secretariat 2009)

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58 The Oceania Centre was the focus of my portfolio project in fulfilment of a Master of Arts at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa entitled Biau Kula: Space, Process, and Creativity at the Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture (2007). The project included a paper, self-produced documentary, and selection of art works I produced during my time as visiting artist at the Oceania Centre.

59 Sugar is Fiji’s principle agricultural product.
Fijians make up the largest ethnic group, followed by Indians, who were introduced as labourers to work in Fiji’s sugar cane industry in the late 1800s because a provision of the colonial agreement prohibited indigenous people from being used as forced labour. In 2007, the Indo-Fijian and Indian population made up nearly forty percent of Fiji’s 830,000 residents. (Fiji Islands Bureau of Statistics 2010) Ethnic tensions between indigenous Fijians and Indo-Fijians have been a root cause of four coup d’état in Fiji since 1987. The most recent began in December 2006 and the military regime of Commodore Frank Bainimarama has delayed democratic elections until 2014.

USP was established in 1968 to meet the needs of the diverse region through a range of academic programmes at the main campus, Laucala, and satellite campuses in the twelve member countries.60 Samoan poet, novelist, and educator Albert Wendt taught in the university’s Literature Department, held an administrative position with Extension Services, and was involved with numerous creative writing initiatives including the South Pacific Creative Arts Society. (Whimp 2010) During his time at USP (1974-1988),62 Wendt published several essays that discussed the development of contemporary arts in Oceania including “Towards a New Oceania” (1976) and “The Artist and the Reefs Breaking Open” (1978).63 For Wendt, as for Hau’ofa twenty years later, the artist residency programme was a way to realise his vision for Oceania. Wendt’s vision was not a quest for a revival of past cultures “but for the creation of new cultures which are free of the taint of colonialism and based firmly on our own pasts. The quest should be for a new Oceania.” (Wendt 1976, 53) Wendt perceived the artistic activity during the 1970s across the Pacific Islands as part of a cultural awakening, inspired, fostered, and led by Pacific people that were not stopped by “the artificial frontiers drawn by the colonial powers.” (Wendt 1976, 58) He concluded:

This artistic renaissance is enriching our cultures further, reinforcing our identities/self-respect/and pride, and taking us through a genuine decolonisation; it is also acting as a unifying force in our region. In their individual journeys into the Void, these artists, through their work, are explaining us to ourselves and creating a new Oceania. (Wendt 1976, 60)

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60 USP’s member countries are Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Sāmoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.
61 Wendt is also a painter who began exhibiting his work in 2005. (Dekker 2009; Pacific Star Map 2010)
62 Wendt became Director of USP’s Sāmoa campus around 1980 but returned to Suva again in the mid-1980s to take up the university’s first chair of Pacific Literature until moving to the University of Auckland in 1988. (Lal and Fortune 2000, 537)
63 Wendt’s essays were originally published in Manu, USP’s journal dedicated to sharing contemporary literary and artistic work in the region.
Hau'ofa was to think of these words as he searched for a thematic concept for the Oceania Centre. (Hau'ofa 2008b, 56)

Wendt’s ideas for residencies, as well as workshops for artists across the region to develop skills and networks, were part of his wider aspirations, described in “Towards a New Oceania”, for the role of artistic expression in asserting cultural identity for post-colonial Oceania. Wendt asserted that the development of contemporary art was not simply about the emergence of new styles of visual arts but a movement that celebrated indigeneity, independence, and unifying cultural attributes. (Wendt 1976, 1978) During the 1970s, Wendt initiated artist workshops through the university’s extension services, such as the Tonga Regional Visual Arts Workshop in 1976, and artist residencies at the Fiji campus as community outreach initiatives. (Crowl 1997; Report on Tonga RVAW 1978; Wendt 1977) The university invited artists from its member countries to spend two or three months on campus to produce a body of work. There were four documented artists in residence from the first in 1972 until the Oceania Centre opened in 1997: Wallisian Aloi Pilioko64 (1972), Solomon Islander Kuai Maueha65 (1976), Solomon Islander Dickson Taumata (1976), and Tongan Aleki Prescott (1977). The artists were all carvers except for Pilioko, a painter. They worked out in the open, in view of passers by, to encourage creativity at the university where no fine arts courses were offered. (Michoutouchkine and Crocombe 1973; Wendt 1982)

There was no formal structure or consistent programming for the residencies in the 1970s. Artists were provided with accommodation, a living stipend, materials, and workspace at the university, and transportation costs were also met. There was no public call for applicants. Instead, artists were nominated by Wendt and other extension services staff when they recognised talented individuals. For example, Kuai Maueha was invited for the residency because, while visiting Betikama Carving Centre outside Honiara during a trip to the Solomon Islands, Wendt was fascinated by the unusual, distorted, and, often, crude carvings (fig. 3.1) that were unlike the other “tourist type” carvings he saw. (Foanaota 1996; Wendt 1978, 1982) Pilioko, Taumata, and Prescott were established artists recognised for innovative work within their respective communities.

The residencies in the 1970s were a means of bringing contemporary art practices and styles to the campus of USP, but it is likely that the absence of specific directives hampered a permanent implementation of a residency programme. Another probable

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64 Although from Wallis, Aloi Pilioko lived in member country, Vanuatu, when invited for the residency.
65 Maueha’s first name was spelled Kaui by Wendt but Kuai by Lawrence Foanaota, former director of the Solomon Islands National Museum; I use the latter spelling.
reason for the cessation was that Wendt moved to Sāmoa in 1980 to become director of
the newest USP satellite campus. Although these residencies are not the primary focus of
this chapter, it is important to acknowledge them as an early initiative to bring visual arts
to the university campus. The challenges of bringing artists to Fiji and inconsistency of
those residencies might have caused Hau’ofa to initiate long-term programmes to
provide continual support for local artists.

Sponsors

Hau’ofa was a senior tutor in the University of Papua New Guinea’s
Anthropology Department from 1968 through 1970, concurrent with Ulli and Georgina
Beier’s time in Port Moresby. Hau’ofa told anthropologist Nicholas Thomas, “[Ulli and
Georgina Beier] were responsible for the birth of the new contemporary arts in Papua
New Guinea.” (Thomas forthcoming) Beier’s and Craig’s initiatives with artists in Papua
New Guinea became a model for residencies at the Oceania Centre more than twenty
years later. A significant difference between residencies facilitated by Craig at the Creative
Arts Centre or National Arts School and Oceania Centre was that, rather than promoting
a national identity through contemporary art, Hau’ofa’s desire was to nurture an Oceanic
identity that would “help free [Pacific people] from the prevailing, externally generated
definitions of [their] past, present, and future.” (Hau’ofa 2008b, 41) This Oceanic identity
was not meant to replace other identities such as Fijian, Tongan, or Solomon Islander,
but to “add something else on top of what [they already] have” (Thomas forthcoming) to
foster a common identity based on the common inheritance of a large part of the Pacific
Ocean. He felt that such a common identity would galvanise “the advancement of [their]
collective interests.” (Hau’ofa 2008b, 41) He developed those ideas while working in at
USP during the 1980s and 1990s.

In the early 1980s, Hau’ofa was hired by USP to teach sociology and so he
resigned from a government position in Tonga to return to Suva, where he had attended
high school. By the early 1990s, he was appointed head of USP’s School of Social and
Economic Development. In 1994, the university’s governing council called for the
establishment of a cultural centre. Since Hau’ofa had received widespread acclaim for his
novels, short stories, and “Our Sea of Islands” that focused on issues of Pacific culture,
he was appointed to the advisory committee. The committee was asked to develop a
strategy for a cultural tourist centre based on the popular and profitable Polynesian
Cultural Centre run by Brigham Young University on the island of O’ahu in Hawai’i.
At the Polynesian Cultural Centre, Pacific Islands students on scholarships at the Mormon university perform traditional dances and re-create cultural ceremonies for visitors. The idea of becoming involved in tourism entertainment was unanimously rejected by USP’s committee. Hau’ofa reported: “That was the only thing that it was united in.” (Hau’ofa et al. 1993, 4) Unable to establish a viable plan of action, the committee eventually disbanded.

When the university re-attempted establishing an arts and culture centre in 1996, Hau’ofa was invited to form a committee. He took control and comments: “All those who held contrary views [to him] in the previous committee were uninvited.” (Hau’ofa et al. 1993, 6) With no opposition to Hau’ofa’s desire to establish a centre to develop Oceanic arts and culture, plans for the centre moved through the university’s bureaucratic process with unprecedented speed and the Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture opened in 1997. (Hau’ofa 2003b, 6)

Having no experience with arts, Hau’ofa invited Georgina and Ulli Beier to spend a month at the centre to conduct an assessment and write a report based on their experiences fostering artists in Papua New Guinea and Nigeria. (Hau’ofa 2003b, 6) During the consultancy in 1997, Georgina Beier also conducted a metal sculpture workshop that was not affiliated with the university. (G. Beier and Tröger 2001, 54) The Beiers’ consultancy report did not provide concrete suggestions but offered advice that reflected their experiences.66 As discussed in Chapter II, Ulli and Georgina Beier believed that European methods of learning and interpreting art negatively affected those in colonial Africa and that even those “students with strong personalities and original creative talents often took years to liberate themselves.” (Hau’ofa 2003b, 13) This influenced Hau’ofa’s decision to avoid formal courses in order to foster “an Oceanic way of transmission of knowledge” which meant disregarding foreign “yardsticks” so that artists could develop their own canons and produce “[f]orms, sounds, and movements people across the region would accept as theirs.” (Hau’ofa 2003a) By following the advice of and model designed by Europeans, was it really an Oceanic methodology? As the analysis of the residencies demonstrates, there were few strategies for fostering an Oceanic arts movement at the Centre, which was likely a result of loosely designing a structure on outsiders’ experiences rather than personal knowledge.

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66 I have not been able to obtain a copy of Ulli and Georgina Beier’s consultancy report. It is not available at USP’s library and Hau’ofa did not have a copy when asked in 2006. Therefore, I have drawn from essays by Hau’ofa and Georgina Beier that reference the report.
The centre was part of the university and funded like other departments, even if it did not have the typical requirements or assessment for academic or professional programmes. The Oceania Centre’s budget allowed for a limited staff that included Hau’ofa and a cleaner with additions of an administrator and technician in 1998. Between 2000 and 2003, a fulltime choreographer and a sound technician were hired as fulltime staff. Artists in residence, dancers, and a composer were paid from the centre’s budget, although they were not considered university staff. Walter Fraser, Director of Pacific Studies at University of Auckland, was Registrar for USP from 2001 to 2008. He described how the Oceania Centre managed to retain recurrent funding although it did not have enrolment or courses associated with university programmes:

[The university] didn’t know what it wanted, and still doesn’t know what it wants. It was partly… in awe of Hau’ofa’s… persona… They kind of gave him this thing to play with and they said, ‘Okay you can go be director of this Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture’ and so he… [responded], ‘Okay this is my creative space’ and [he] put the [imaginary] ring fence around the centre and said okay give me the money and don’t ask me any questions.’ (Fraser 2010)

While Fraser dismissed the university’s lack of control over the centre as a consequence of wonder or even trepidation towards Hau’ofa, Hau’ofa claimed responsibility for isolating the centre and reasoned that it was a desire for operational and fiscal freedom. (Hau’ofa 2003a) This was one of the reasons that the centre used its resources for artists in residence rather than students or employees; they were not officially obligated to the university, the Oceania Centre’s artists, dancers, and musicians were only responsible to Hau’ofa. It seems surprising that USP would fund a financially unsustainable centre that only had vague directives to foster ‘Oceanic’ art forms. Fraser remarked that the financial burden was tolerated because “in [the university’s] eyes, they are investing money in the future of creative arts and they are adding to the world of Pacific creativity… But the reality is, in my eyes, far from that, but the thing is nobody [has] ever told [the university] that in a very authoritative way, because who can challenge Epeli Hau’ofa’s views?” (Fraser 2010) Hau’ofa’s reputation as a visionary, particularly within the field of Pacific Studies, became larger than life; so when he declared the Oceania Centre a sacred space, people were hesitant to critique something that was without precedent in the region. It is possible that Hau‘ofa remained in the position because of his influential and, arguably, strategic allies in the university and government which gave him special dispensation.

67 The Oceania Centre’s cleaner, Miliakere Naikece is a weaver. Although weaving is not practised at the centre, Hau’ofa encouraged Naikece to weave at the Centre and he often commissioned her to weave mats that he gifted to special visitors.
because, in Fraser’s words, they “basically said, ‘Okay, hands off. Nobody can touch
him.’” (Fraser 2010)

Fraser’s points highlight the tensions between the university’s administration and
Hau'ofa who had taken a protective and controlling position in order to provide a space
for people with natural talent to express themselves without the requirements or
constraints of Western education or training systems. Yet this was fundamentally
opposed to the university’s inherent purpose. The Oceania Centre survived because the
university believed that the artists were producing innovative, cutting edge art and
Hau'ofa maintained an air of mystery by not publicising the centre’s activities or inviting
external review or critique of the centre or artists. While this was part of his effort to
protect the artists in residence from commercialisation and the associated effects of
commercial ventures which could have caused artists to produce saleable work rather
than experiment, it might have been attributable to his lack of experience working with
or writing about arts.

Hau'ofa did not completely conceal the centre’s activities. He strategically
generated interest by praising the contemporary Oceanic art forms produced there as
innovative and representative of his notion of Oceanic with colleagues and visiting
scholars that frequently passed through Fiji, but few were invited for lengthy stays to
critique or study the centre’s programmes or art. The brief visits of people like historian
Greg Dening (Australia National University), anthropologists Margaret Jolly (Australia
National University) and Geoffrey White (University of Hawai‘i and East-West Centre),
in addition to USP’s staff that supported Hau’ofa’s initiatives at the Oceania Centre such
as Konai Helu-Thaman, Subramani, Teweiariki Teero, and Teresia Teaiwa, helped build
a positive reputation for the Oceania Centre beyond Fiji. (Hau'ofa 2008b; V. Hereniko
2006; Jolly 2001)

The implication of the lack of formal programmes and external publicity or
review was that the artists did not receive unbiased critique from arts professionals.
Several articles and essays have mentioned the Oceania Centre but critique has been
limited. An exception is anthropologist Fumi Watanabe’s article “The Collective, the
Individual and ‘Red Wave Art’: The Importance of Styles at the Oceania Centre for Arts
and Culture” (2010). Watanabe’s balanced review of the artists’ styles was based on
extensive fieldwork conducted at the centre between 2004 and 2008. Susan Cochrane
made brief reference to Hau'ofa’s initiatives and Fong’s art works in “Art in Movement
Across the Pacific” (2005). Though at that time, she had not actually visited the Oceania
Centre, she interviewed Hau'ofa and two artists in Australia. Cochrane visited the Oceania Centre in 2006 during the Melanesian Arts Festival. It was not the sole purpose of her trip.

These elements illustrate how the Oceania Centre’s artist residencies were at the discretion of Hau'ofa even though the university funded the centre’s programmes.

**Criteria**

Hau'ofa did not set out to attract established visual artists already set in their ways; instead beginners, specifically young people aged 18 to 24 who were not full-time students or otherwise employed were targeted to become artists in residence. This attracted mostly young men; as already discussed few women have become long-term artists in residence.

Unlike my later case studies, the Oceania Centre’s residencies did not require applications or prerequisites. Visiting artists in residence were invited by Hau'ofa and the centre paid some or all of the artists’ expenses. In return, the visiting artist conducted workshops, practised alongside the local artists in residence in the shared workspace, and showed work in an exhibition that was timed to coincide with the end of the residency. The visiting artists generally conducted two-week long workshops that were advertised to the public to attract creative individuals to the centre, introduce basic skills, and generate interest in the centre. Visiting artists in residence to the centre included New Zealand-based Niuean John Pule (1998, 2001, 2006), New Zealand-based Rotuman and Scottish Sofia Tekela-Smith (2001), Fiji-based South African Marita Brodie (2005) and New Zealand-based Tongan Filipe Tohi (2006, 2007). Art workshops were advertised in the newspaper. Pule recalled that forty people responded to the painting workshop advertisement in 1998. He and Hau'ofa interviewed them and selected twelve to participate. Like other processes at the centre, selection followed no set of rules but was based on Pule and Hau'ofa’s intuition about which applicants to choose.

Those workshops were instrumental in training artists and developing the programme because they became one pathway for becoming a long-term artist in residence. The workshop could be a trial period; there was no commitment required from the participant or the centre beyond the two-week workshop. After the workshop, however, Hau'ofa invited some artists to continue working at the centre as an artist in residence. Invitations were based on his notion of who would flourish creatively and contribute to the “home for arts” at the Oceania Centre. Hau'ofa’s process of inviting artists in residence is closely aligned with the way Georgina Beier invited artists she felt
were on a similar wavelength to her. The significant difference was that he worked for an institution. If professors hand-picked the students allowed to enter their courses there would be outrage. But Hau'ofa made these decisions quietly so as not to “attract unwelcome attention,” (Hau’ofa 2003b, 7) which may be one of the reasons that there was limited documentation of the centre’s programmes during its initial years.

The residency structure evolved over the years but, in general, it provided artists with studio space, at-cost materials, exhibition opportunities, participation in the Oceania Centre’s workshops, and what Hau'ofa called a nominal stipend but Fraser referred to as salary. (Fraser 2010) I agree with Hau'ofa that the pay was nominal because, from what I was told by artists such as Mason Lee, Josaia McNamara, and Lingikoni Vaka'uta, the amount covered bus fares and perhaps shared lunches at the centre, certainly not what a salaried employee at the university received. (Lee 2006; McNamara 2006; Vaka'uta 2006) Those artists that held dual positions at the centre, such as the technician Ben Fong received a more substantial salary based on their additional responsibilities. Artists in residence were expected to treat the residency like a job, coming to the centre to work on their art on a regular basis. There were no set durations for the residencies or any regular performance reviews. Fraser noted how the lack of evaluation meant that artists remained on residencies because this supplied them with a permanent job with few requirements.

Artists in residence worked in a shared studio. Lingikoni Vaka'uta, an artist in residence at the centre from 1998 until 2009, explained why the workshops and shared workspace was successful, he said:

[W]e borrow the Pacific concept. If you grew up in the villages… you watch the older people do stuff… sometimes they tell you what to do but most of the time you just watch and you do it… It’s the same thing here, we bring in the new artists… we have the workshops… [T]hen we give them the canvas [and say] ‘Here is your canvas, you have stories’… [W]e just let them… explore. If they want colours we help them with technical stuff like colours… But the creative stuff… [w]e let the artists create their own [ideas], that way it comes from inside and that way they feel close[r] to their art work. If you tell them, this is how you should paint, this is what you are going to paint, well, then they’re not artists, they’re just people who do what you’re doing. (Vaka'uta 2006)

Vaka'uta’s explanation does not clarify any criteria but provides some context for the programming. Hau'ofa encouraged participative processes of learning such as workshops and shared workspaces, which he believed would recognise the potential of each individual while simultaneously forming a dedicated community of artists learning from one another.
The university and Suva’s diverse population meant that the immediate environment was multicultural, yet the majority of artists in residence were Fijian. Pule recalled that there were several Indo-Fijians in the first workshop, including Sangeeta Singh, but none became long-term artists in residence. This could have been on account of Hau’ofa’s esoteric notion of an “Oceanic” art movement he hoped to encourage. Some people did not relate to such a concept because they did not see enough of their own cultures in the Oceania Centre’s initiatives.

Not all artists practising at the centre were on residencies; some came casually. For example, university students interested in the styles and practices emerging from the Oceania Centre were allowed to work in the shared studio spaces. Although the Oceania Centre aspired to invite artists from across Oceania for residencies, in reality, artists living in Fiji took up most of the residencies. The centre did not have enough funding to sponsor artists to travel from other parts of the region to take up residencies, aside from the occasional visiting artist like Pule.

Twenty percent commission was taken from sales of any art work sold from the Oceania Centre and went into an account used to purchase supplies for long-term artists in residence. Red Wave artists could take small personal loans from that account. These aspects of the centre’s unsustainable budgetary practice were criticised by Fraser because he commented that profits from sales should have been reinvested into the centre’s budget rather than relying on the university to cover costs. (Fraser 2010) While the artists appreciated the commission policy because it reinvested the fees in the artists, it contributed to the unrealistic situation for the artists because such an arrangement is unusual in business and the Oceania Centre, in part, functioned as a business by selling art works through exhibitions and to local and foreign enthusiasts that visited the centre. This is another feature of the centre’s programming that seems to contradict the university’s objective to reinvest funding for further development. I imagine this was a significant point of contention with the administration and that Hau’ofa prevailed because of his strategic alliances within the university.

Finally, a condition of long-term residencies was that artists were limited to exhibiting in Red Wave Collective designated exhibitions. This meant that Hau’ofa approved exhibitions, solo or group, and publicity materials associated with the exhibitions that carried the Red Wave Collective moniker. This was another way that Hau’ofa was directly involved in building, arguably shaping, profiles for the centre’s visual artists. During his tenure, Red Wave artists were exhibited in various parts of Fiji.
Artists


The five artists discussed in this case study have been selected to emphasise different aspects and outcomes from the Oceania Centre’s residencies. There are numerous similarities amongst their experiences because of their long-term relationships with the centre and each other, as well as involvement in the Red Wave Collective. I highlight different aspects of the careers of the four long-term artists in residence to avoid repetitively summarising all their experiences. For example, I focus on McNamara’s later experience as an artist in residence in Bangladesh for eight months rather than Lee’s month-long residency in Tahiti in 2005 because, for McNamara, the external residency was a seminal experience. Moreover, I emphasise Lee’s experience leaving the Oceania Centre to pursue an independent career. Although there are numerous points of overlap and intersection amongst the artists’ experiences, as of 2011, these artists each have different relationships with the Oceania Centre and different professional careers.

Peni Saimone ‘Ben’ Fong

Peni Saimone Fong, known to most as ‘Ben’, was the first artist to join the centre. He is Fijian and Chinese. Fong’s creative talents were identified during Georgina Beier’s 1997 welding workshop intended to stimulate industrial welders’ creativity. (G. Beier and

69 The dates listed for these artists are generalised, many of the artists have had months or years away from the Oceania Centre during the periods I have given. For instance, Jeki Lagi held different jobs off and on between 2004 and 2008 during which time he remained a casual artist at the centre rather than an artist in residence. The difference is that he did not receive a stipend as a casual artist practising at the centre. Another example is Ledua Peni. He left the centre from 2004 to 2005 to study graphic design at Fiji Institute of Technology and upon completion he resumed his long-term residency at the Oceania Centre.
Tröger 2001, 54) At the time, Fong was beginning a career in engineering and welding and applied for what he thought was a technical workshop. In the same way that Beier conducted workshops in Oshogbo and residencies in Port Moresby, she selected participants on her perception of their potential. (G. Beier and Tröger 2001, 54) It is not clear what attracted her to Fong, but during the workshop Beier became impressed with his skill and ingenuity and she suggested to Hau’ofa that he offer Fong a position at the centre. After initial hesitation about pursuing an artistic career, Fong accepted Hau’ofa’s invitation to join the Oceania Centre as artist in residence and technician. The dual position was advantageous in allowing Fong to focus on developing and maintaining his sculpture practice while using his engineering skills because, as technician, Fong oversaw expansion of the Oceania Centre’s buildings as well as other construction projects.

Also as part of the consultancy, Georgina Beier was commissioned by the Oceania Centre to design its logo and, because she was impressed with Fong’s abilities, asked him to assist her. The logo (fig. 3.2) they designed resembled a sculpture Beier produced in 1988 (fig. 3.3), commissioned by the Gold Coast College of Advanced Education in Queensland, Australia. While conceptualising the work, Beier reflected upon Hau’ofa’s vision for an Oceanic arts movement and the role of USP as the location. They created a fish that curls into itself. The round shape alludes to the constant cycles of ocean flow and movement of life in and around the ocean, and eleven bolts protruding from the fish’s spine represent the university’s eleven member countries.\(^70\)

Working with Beier was important to Fong because it affirmed his potential as an artist. While Fong does not seem to have a specific style, he has a systematic approach influenced by the advice that Beier gave him on the first day of the workshop: “create something God has never done.” (Fong 2007) Whether it is a coup leader’s head on a rooster’s body (fig. 3.4), the outline of a turtle’s shell inscribed with scenes of ocean life – formed by steel rods (fig. 3.6), or an elegant silhouette of a mother and child shaped from a simple piece of steel to honour the birth of his fourth child (fig. 3.7), Fong constructs sculptures in ways that he has never seen before.

Fong stands out amongst the artists in residence at the Oceania Centre because he is one of only a few artists to use his work for political commentary.\(^71\) The coup d’état of 2000 prompted Fong to reflect on Fiji’s political upheavals through sculpture. George

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\(^70\) In 1997, the university only had eleven member countries because the Marshall Islands had not yet joined the consortium.

\(^71\) William Bakalevu is another artist in residence (1999-2005) that criticised Fiji’s political crises and injustices throughout the region through his paintings.
Speight (2000) (fig. 3.4) demonstrates Fong’s technical ability and sense of humour while making potent political commentary. The caricature illustrates Fong’s disapproval of the military leader, Speight, who accused Prime Minister Mahendra Chaudhry of ineffective leadership. Fong explained that under Speight’s regime, Indo-Fijians were forced to flee and “no one should be treated like that.” (Cochrane 2000) Fong portrayed Speight as an animal resembling a rooster with a bald head of shiny brass and a large mouth to indicate his “big-headed character”, while a polished streak down his back symbolised his yellow streak or cowardice. (Cochrane 2000) The animal was perched on a grenade made up of broken peace signs to symbolise the fear Speight instilled. In Fong’s own words:

I have done this work because someone has to come out and say that the Chaudhry government had done a lot of good. The democratically elected government should be reinstated, and we should not have an interim government forced on the people… I understand the consequences that may occur, but use my work in the hope that people will understand what has occurred in Fiji. (Cochrane 2000)

There was no negative outcome for the sculpture, Fong’s response to the political situation earned him international attention; George Speight featured in the daily newspaper Fiji Sun and in exhibitions in Fiji and Australia.

Aside from the initial workshop hosted by Beier in 1997, there have not been other formal sculpture workshops. For the most part, Fong has been left to develop skills independently. But, although he does not work in the same shared workspace that the painters do because of his need for specialised equipment and safety protocol, the centre has given him the opportunity to work with internationally recognised artists such as Beier, Alaskan artist Holly Gittlein, and New Zealand-based Tongan artist Filipe Tohi.

In 2006, Holly Gittlein was on a scholarship at the university, working on environmental conservation projects. As an established metal sculptor whose subject matter was often the marine environment, Gittlein felt that her artistic practice would complement that of other artists at the Oceania Centre and asked Hau‘ofa if she could work there. (Gittlein 2010) She shared Fong’s welding studio and collaborated with him for several months. During that time, Fong began creating two dimensional wall sculptures similar to Gittlein’s (figs. 3.5 and 3.6), yet in a distinctive style. In Turtle (2006) (fig. 3.6), he used iron rods to create the outline of a turtle and, within the hexagonal plates of the turtle’s shell, included other ocean-faring creatures such as crabs, lobster, shrimp, fish, and octopus. Turtle does not touch upon political issues, but by using rods that reinforce the concrete of Suva’s harbour side promenade, Fong touches upon
environmental issues resulting from human’s efforts to control the ocean. These issues are particularly salient for communities that traditionally relied on the ocean’s provisions but have faced the ramifications of pollution and over-fishing, amongst other consequences of modern intervention.

Fong also worked with Filipe Tohi during his residency at the Oceania Centre in 2007. Tohi designed three sculptural representations based on the *lalava* (lashing) concepts (figs. 3.8 and 3.9) that he has developed, and Fong assembled and welded the sculptures (fig. 3.10). Tohi’s style does not seem to have influenced Fong’s work. The experience gave Fong an opportunity to collaborate with a well-known sculptor and affirmed Fong’s specialist skills since, although Tohi conceptualises sculptures in metal, he is reliant on others to construct his designs. Fong’s role as technician has likely contributed to his willingness to assist artists like Tohi.

For Fong, collaboration with visiting artists inspired him but did not limit him to a particular style or format. This is evident by comparing the works he produced with Beier, Gittlein, and Tohi with his subsequent sculptures. For instance, the materials and aesthetic characteristics of *George Speight* (2000) (fig. 3.4) are quite different from the logo he created with Beier (fig. 3.3) in 1997. While the intention of each is different, this example highlights the fact that he did not rely on a process or stylistic approach that Beier may have offered. In terms of his experience with Gittlein, his work had obvious thematic parallels to hers that were also influenced by Hau'ofa’s emphasis of Oceanic themes, yet his sculptures were easily distinguishable. After Gittlein returned to Alaska, Fong began a series of steel sculptures less than a half-meter high, including *Mother and Child* (2006) (fig. 3.7), which demonstrates that Fong did not linger on the series he created while working alongside Gittlein. The same was true after Tohi’s departure; Fong did not again emulate the geometric patterns produced by *lalava*. These examples are not intended to suggest that the collaborative projects and shared workspace did not benefit Fong; he embraced the artistic and cultural exchange and the way that visiting artists challenged his techniques and innovation.

As of 2011, Fong remains the centre’s technician and an artist in residence, although his primary focus is art. Through his residency, he has represented the Red Wave Collective, travelling and exhibiting his work internationally including the Dominican Republic, Australia, and Palau.
**John Pule**

In 1998, Hau’ofa invited John Pule for a visiting residency and to conduct the first painting workshop because he felt that “[o]f painters with Pacific island origins, Pule was the most distinctively Oceanic in his creations.” (Hau‘ofa 2003b, 18) Hau’ofa was referring to Pule’s style that was inspired by *hiapo* (Niuean barkcloth) designs, Oceanic (especially Niuean) mythology and genealogy, and incorporated a palette dominated by earth tones, as seen in *Kokobonea* (1993) (fig. 3.11). As a poet and novelist, Hau'ofa may have also been drawn to Pule because of his poetry and novel, *The Shark That Ate The Sun* (1992). Pule also conducted workshops in 2001 and was Acting Director in 2006 while Hau'ofa was on leave.

Pule is a self-taught artist which contributed to his success in conducting workshops at the Oceania Centre because he could identify with the workshop participants, many of whom had not completed a formal education. Pule explained to the workshop participants how he found inspiration in *hiapo* for his paintings, which affirmed his relationship with his heritage:

> I had a collection of *tapa* from around the islands and I looked closely at them and noticed their ‘architecture’. When you look down on to the *tapa*, the patterns look like a plan of a village, or a plan of tracks going down to the ocean… I stretched the canvas, bought some paint – burnt umber, like the colours used on *tapa* – then I became an architect. (Mallon and Pereira 1997, 91-92)

Pule instructed workshop participants to look to things that contained cultural information for inspiration, such as *masi* (Fijian for barkcloth) or legends and stories. This complemented Hau‘ofa’s idea that if artists drew from heritage and “listened to the ancestors,” a style of contemporary art would emerge that could act as an intersection and point of understanding for Oceanic artists from different cultural backgrounds. (Hau'ofa 2003a) However, many of the artists, such as Josua Toganivalu, emulated or even copied Pule’s style and format. This was the Oceania Centre’s first approach to training artists: imitation. Fraser remarked that art works produced at the centre after Pule’s 2001 workshop mostly resembled Pule’s paintings. (Fraser 2010)

Pule’s style of painting based on nineteenth-century *hiapo* developed after his returning to Niue in 1991, his first visit since leaving with his parents for New Zealand at the age of two. During that research trip, he recognised *hiapo* as a form of painting through which Niuean artists documented and tried to make sense of changes taking place, such as contact with Europeans in the nineteenth century. (Were 2004) Pule emulated the style of *hiapo* to address issues of the history of colonisation and
missionisation in Oceania by incorporating images such as crucifixes, ministers, helicopters, and buildings. Pule arranged *Nofo tata kehe tan lima haaku* (1996) (fig. 3.12) in a grid-like pattern, and integrated decorative Niuean motifs with symbols of Western influences in Niue, such as a Bible being read by candlelight in the middle-right of the second register and crucifixes in an aligned section in the lower registers. Pule’s paintings used grids to create narratives that posited clashes between tradition and modern influences, as seen in this work. Pule often referenced Niuean legends through invented stylised creatures resembling turtles, sharks, and birds. He also indicated the influence of Christianity by including crucifixes within segments that depicted human interactions.

Similar characteristics, particularly the format based on *hiapo*, were clearly evident in the work produced by Fijian artists during the 1998 and 2001 workshops. Although *hiapo* and *masi* are stylistically and technically different, Fijian artists were able to apply Pule’s methodology to look to *masi* for inspiration for their art works. Decorating barkcloth is a means of recording history and cultural knowledge throughout Oceania and Hau‘ofa encouraged artists to draw from their heritage to tell stories, it seems inevitable that some would have found inspiration from *masi* even without Pule’s direction. Josaia McNamara’s work confirms this; he began painting contemporary compositions derived from customary imagery on blank *masi* before joining the Oceania Centre or meeting Pule. After participating in the 2001 workshop led by Pule and over the years of friendship between the two artists, McNamara has emulated Pule’s work, which, by 2001, was moving away from the grid format. Other artists maintained the grid style and use of images derived from *masi*, as was the case of Toganivalu.

Pule went on to have a lasting relationship with the Oceania Centre. When he reflected on his time at the Oceania Centre with Hau‘ofa and experiences with the Red Wave Collective artists, Pule acknowledged the skills and knowledge he brought to the centre, but also explained that the time he spent there was very important for his personal development because it connected him to Oceania and helped him understand Hau‘ofa’s ideas from “Our Sea of Islands”. (Pule 2010) Although the residencies at the Oceania Centre did not influence Pule’s work stylistically, it helped him understand the similarities and differences amongst Oceanic cultures which, in turn, reinforced what he was doing in his art. (Pule 2010)
Josua Toganivalu

Fijian artist Josua Toganivalu was always interested in art but he did not pick up a paintbrush until joining the Oceania Centre’s workshop with Pule in 1998. He explained that he never saw art as a career option until meeting Hau‘ofa and Pule. (Toganivalu 2006) During the workshop, Toganivalu identified with Pule and was inspired by him. This is evident in Toganivalu’s imitation of Pule’s style as seen in *Speardance* (1998) (fig. 3.13). Toganivalu used a grid pattern, similar to Pule’s, to depict a variety of motifs derived from Fijian *masi* and carving, and combined those with invented designs. He adopted Pule’s system of using a grid to construct an ‘architecture’, as well as other techniques that Pule described, such as X-ray, “When I do my lizards and birds I also do the insides of them, so you can see the way the insides work, rather than just doing the outsides.” (Mallon and Pereira 1997, 92) Emulating Pule’s imagery, Toganivalu exposed the insides of a fish to reveal a heart and skeleton (fig. 3.14), sectioning the fish to reveal different layers and dimensions of a single fish – the head exterior, skeletal midsection, scaled centre, and stylised tail. Although imitation was a way to introduce new techniques and methods of conceptualisation to participants with no prior experience, there was no alternative to Pule’s process since he conducted both the 1998 and 2001 workshops and there were no others in between. Pule’s painting style had changed by 2001, no longer based on a grid format, but Toganivalu did not adopt the new styles in the way that other workshops participants did.

Toganivalu has proudly credited Pule for inspiring his style. He also used burnt umber, prominent in Pule’s work; Toganivalu explained how and why he used earth colours:

> Instead of using the *masi* and *tapa*, I am using canvas but choosing those earth colours [found on *masi*] and then I use some of the designs on *tapa* … and include my own stories and … legends and some of my personal issues to do with, with the journey of life… with my painting career. My paintings have remained consistent with the colours and the styles… I’ve experimented a little bit with colour but didn’t feel comfortable with going into [different] colour[s]… I preferred working with earth colours and black and white. (Toganivalu 2006)

Toganivalu’s explanation reveals positive and negative aspects that can result from brief workshops. Without follow-up and consistent guidance to promote the development of new ideas, artists like Toganivalu might not push themselves to experiment. Instead, Toganivalu developed a formula, based on emulating Pule, and maintained it because it was successful and has led to many sales. Toganivalu’s comment indicates that his concern was a strong style rather than continual experimentation. His style has not
changed dramatically over the years. *Na Kalokalo/the star* (2009) (fig. 3.15) demonstrates that Toganivalu maintained elements of the style he first learned at the workshop. There is consistency in his iconography but he also incorporated more traditional elements from *masi*, such as the repetitive pattern of the circular design elements throughout the composition that Watanabe described as “the most important common attribute of Red Wave painting and widely recognised as an orthodox ‘Oceanic style.’” (Watanabe 2010, 122)

Around 2004, Toganivalu began working in new media including digital graphic design and so, although his painting style has not changed dramatically, he has challenged himself to expand his artistic practice. Toganivalu remained an artist in residence at the centre until 2005 and then he began teaching electronic graphic design at Fiji Institute of Technology. Since he was primarily teaching through electronic media, Toganivalu did not pass on design ideas similar to those he learned from Pule. In 2011, Toganivalu continued to exhibit with the Red Wave Collective and established his own graphics company, Penikau Studios, to supplement his independent painting practice. (Toganivalu 2011)

**Josaia McNamara**

In the late 1990s, Josaia McNamara began painting in his village outside Suva. The contemporary style McNamara developed was inspired by customary symbols and motifs found on traditional *masi* and carvings, reminiscent of Pule’s approach but completely unrelated since he was working independently at his home. In 1998, McNamara joined the centre for several months before leaving to volunteer with a Christian organisation that same year. (McNamara 2006)

McNamara continued to paint independently in his village until he applied and was accepted to join Pule’s second workshop in 2001. Following the workshop, McNamara took up a residency that lasted until 2009. Like Toganivalu, McNamara was inspired by Pule’s artistic style but in this case because it was similar to what he was already making. He also found motivation in the Pule’s international success. (McNamara 2006) While McNamara’s early paintings alluded to the ‘architecture’ or grid format of Pule’s paintings, the workshop led by Pule prompted him to move beyond the grid format to more complex arrangements; most likely influenced by Pule’s progression away from grid formats. Although McNamara did not specify as much, I believe that seeing several other artists imitating the grid style also motivated him to reinvent his approach,
retaining the narrative elements but expressing them in a more dynamic way. He achieved this by intersecting and overlapping shapes within an organised spatial design as seen in *The Eyes of the Star Compass* (2001) (fig. 3.16). This work shows that although McNamara no longer relied on a grid format, he retained forms and motifs from *maisi* as well as the colour scheme.

In the following years, McNamara continued to develop a style that was loosely derived from the grid format but, by changing the proportions and adding multiple semi-transparent layers, he created softness and more depth than the flat, solid figures in paintings by Pule and Toganivalu. McNamara also began to use his art to express ideas about his spiritual journey; which combined his “cultural religious beliefs” practised by his ancestors and his Catholic faith. (McNamara 2007a) In paintings such as, *The Light of the World* (2004) (fig. 3.17), McNamara utilised a wider range of colours and endeavoured to create harmony amongst the forms that seemingly float over a background of opposing warm and cool colours which reference the rhythms and cycles of life.72 (McNamara 2007a)

The development of McNamara’s painting style demonstrates that not all artists in residence continued to imitate a particular style. But McNamara’s experience also demonstrates other opportunities that the residency at the Oceania Centre generated, although he is not the only long-term artist in residence to earn such opportunities. McNamara was invited to exhibit at the Tjibaou Cultural Centre in Nouméa, New Caledonia (2001) as part of the Nouméa Biennial, and exhibited with five other Red Wave artists at October Gallery in London (2006).73 These opportunities were facilitated by Hau’ofa, who oversaw all the Red Wave Collective’s exhibitions. Travelling to and exhibiting in Nouméa and London led to lucrative sales and additional international exhibition opportunities for McNamara. Another opportunity McNamara credited to his long-term residency with the Oceania Centre was the Commonwealth Connections International Arts Residency that he was awarded in 2008.74 McNamara used the

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72 In 2007, I assisted McNamara in transcribing the prose that he wrote to accompany a number of paintings. At the time, the texts did not publicly accompany the paintings; but his descriptions provided me with greater insight to the intended meanings behind his work. However, most of that writing has not been published and so I have not included it here.

73 The Red Wave Collective artists William Bakalevu, Fred Bufata, Mason Lee, Lingikoni Vaka’uta, Josaia McNamara, and Leda Peti exhibited at October Gallery in London from 10 May to 24 June 2006. For more information see: October Gallery 2006)

74 McNamara also received financial assistance from the Britto Arts Fund for accommodation in a building near the university with other international artists in residence.
McNamara used the residency as an opportunity to take his career to another level by leaving his home, where he was part of a supportive creative environment. He decided to challenge himself with new techniques, primarily printmaking, and investigate the art community and market in a place very different from his home.

As part of the residency, he also travelled from Dhaka to Calcutta, Edua, and Nepal for workshops and presentations. McNamara explained that experiences and connections he made during the residency in Bangladesh were invaluable. (McNamara 2009) He especially appreciated the opportunity to take formal courses on printmaking and learned new techniques and styles from Bangladeshi and other visiting artists. One example is *The Enlightened Ones* (2008) (fig. 3.18). In this painting, he abandoned the structure of earlier works to depict a series of stylised star-pods from which spirits emerge. *The Enlightened Ones* continued on the theme of spirituality, yet in this painting McNamara abandoned the multi-layered compositions of previous paintings while retaining and isolating design elements such as the outlined figure and floral motif, which he allowed to float in open space. The way in which he allowed paint to drip along the canvas as demonstrates a departure from the precision of lines and shapes and complex compositions of works like *The Eyes of the Star Compass* (fig. 3.16) or *The Light of the World* (fig. 3.17). McNamara found the residency both influential and inspiring. The artistic and cultural exchange he experienced in Bangladesh seems to be what Hau’ofa wanted for the Oceania Centre: a space for cross-cultural artistic exchange. The limitation of primarily Fiji-based artists in residence meant that such exchange was infrequent.

As of 2010, McNamara was primarily working from his home because travelling to Suva from his village was too time consuming. He remains part of the Red Wave Collective. Although working in his village is preferable for McNamara, he pointed out

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75 In his residency application, McNamara explained his interest in Bangladesh: “The country that I would most like to explore is Bangladesh in the Asian region [I] believe this will enrich my life with new insights about the way Arts have shaped the lives of people in these regions. I would like to make a study of these different cultures and use elements from them that can complement my own work as an Oceanic Artist.” (McNamara 2007b)
that he would not have been able to achieve international recognition or related income without his long-term residency at the centre. (McNamara 2007a)

**Mason Lee**

Mason Lee was an artist in residence at the Oceania Centre from 2000 until 2008. Lee’s artistic practice draws from both his Chinese and Fijian heritage. He attributed his painting skill and style to his Chinese heritage and suggested that his Fijian heritage provided him with content such as legends, oral histories, and traditions of Fiji that feature in his work. Through his art, Lee endeavoured to present his journey through life and reflect on the good and bad in both his life and the world around him. (Lee 2006) When he first began his residency at the centre, Lee found inspiration in legends and myths to tell his own versions of the stories as they relate to him; telling a story was encouraged by Hau’ofa and has become a common attribute of the Red Wave artists. For example, *Sea Quest* (2001) (fig. 3.19) referred to legends about the ocean and navigation.

In 2002, Lee developed a style that was not based on the grid format like many of his peers, which can be seen in *Family* (2002) (fig. 3.20). Lee explained: “[Hau’ofa] told me to create from within using my inner voice to express what is important to me because that is what is really me. From that, my progress as an artist has been a learning process within me.” (Lee 2006) Lee was referring to his personal aspirations as an artist as well as the challenges of working in a shared workshop-type environment where the process of learning through imitation and close relationships with the other long-term artists in residence meant that ideas and styles also became communal. It is not that one person would have an idea and all would claim ownership; rather, artists were expressing stories about legends and life in Oceania, which often focused on the ocean or incorporated traditional motifs and so it was inevitable that certain images would reappear. Therefore, Lee, like McNamara, recognised that in order to stand out at the Oceania Centre, he needed to differentiate his style from other artists. Lee developed a style in which the lines and boundaries of shapes blend and blur, initially established in *Family* and further developed in *Tokairabbe and the Shark God* (2006) (fig. 3.21). Watanabe refers to Lee’s style as “Melting Style” because he enables objects to flow into one another, which she considers “a suitable way to visualize the mythical metaphors so rich in Oceania.” (Watanabe 2010, 122)

*Sea Quest* (fig. 3.19) demonstrates how, with ink on paper, Lee relied on repetitive patterning to fill the ocean dwelling creatures like, fish, sharks, and octopi. The figures
are methodically composed to create a sense of a swirling current around the canoe, while the exhaustive patterning filling the shapes creates a sense of confusion, which may have been Lee’s intention. Through his efforts to create a personal style, the forms became more defined and ordered and as Lee began to fill them with distinct shapes that connect and, to use Watanabe’s term, ‘melt’ into one another, evident in *Tokairahbe and the Shark God* (2006) (fig. 3.21). In this work, Lee used different levels of interlacing elements to compose the bird, hook, shark, and rising waves that border the scene. Within each of the main forms, he used different motifs; for example, the bird’s body is filled with a stylised mask. Lee’s style stands out amongst the other long-term artists in residence because of the melting style used to create representational forms. While other artists’ works often remained derivative of their mentors and peers, Lee, like McNamara, is an example of how the daily workshop style environment of the shared studio propelled some to establish a unique style to differentiate themselves from other artists in residence.

Like his peers, Lee was afforded opportunities by the residency at the Oceania Centre to exhibit internationally as a member of the Red Wave Collective. In 2005, he had two international trips – to the October Gallery in London and Tahiti for a month-long residency with fellow Red Wave artist Irami Buli. In the years to follow, however, Lee wanted to participate in exhibition opportunities outside of the Red Wave Collective. This became an issue when, in 2008, he told Hau’ofa that he wanted to include work in an exhibition in Fiji by artists not associated with the centre. In Lee’s version of the events that unfolded, Hau’ofa refused to grant him permission to exhibit outside of the Red Wave Collective because it was a condition of long-term residencies that artists exhibited their work exclusively with the Red Wave and external exhibitions had to be approved by Hau’ofa. (Lee 2006) This was not the first time Lee had doubts about Hau’ofa’s policies but it was this event that prompted him to resign from his residency. This is an example of how Hau’ofa’s protective manner was detrimental to the artists’ professional growth beyond the Oceania Centre. Since the centre’s resources were extremely limited in aspects such as funding, training, and exhibition opportunities, the artists in residence could have benefited from collaboration with other organisations.

While Lee credited the Oceania Centre for providing the training, resources, and opportunities to establish his career, he wanted to explore other opportunities and exhibit commercially, independent of the Red Wave Collective. After leaving the centre in 2008, Lee established a contemporary art group called Visionary Expressions, which
has five members that work separately and meet informally to support one another. There are no restrictions on where or when the artists exhibit their work. Rather, Visionary Expressions is intended to complement their individual careers by fostering a supportive and resourceful network for artists working independently in and around Suva. (Lee 2010)

Lee, and others who subsequently left the Oceania Centre after Hau'ofa’s death in 2009, have found a new range of opportunities in commercial markets. For instance Lee’s paintings were included in “Pacific Storms” at Bundaberg Regional Art Gallery in 2009, and a joint exhibition with Fatu Feu'u at o’kaioceanikart in Auckland in 2010. While the Red Wave’s exhibitions brought Lee to London and Tahiti, he appreciates the opportunity to stand on his own, although he continues to emphasise that his career development would not have been possible without the support and resources of his residency at the Oceania Centre. (Lee 2006)

_Cultural exchange: the role of culture at the Oceania Centre_

In 2005, Hau'ofa described the role of Oceanic culture and heritage driving creativity in the centre’s mission in “Oceania Centre Corporate Plan”:

Since its establishment, the Oceania Centre has set out deliberately to cultivate and nourish a special spirit of creative originality that would lead to the flourishing of contemporary visual and performing arts firmly rooted in our histories, traditions and our unending adaptations to the changing international environment that is affecting every facet of our existence. The creative processes are continuously experimental in their striving for originality, and for the emergence of a distinctive Oceanic cultural identity that is autonomous and ever moving… The development of new art forms that are truly Oceanic, transcendent of our national and cultural diversity, is very important in that it allows our creative minds to draw on far larger pools of cultural traits than those of our individual national lagoons… The Centre’s emphasis on Oceanic forms and identity in artistic and cultural production, should contribute significantly to the process of regionalisation of our part of the world. The Centre’s stance in relation to its artists is that of facilitation and mentoring. It gives its artists complete freedom of expression requiring only that they are accountable for their actions… The Oceania Centre takes [the] achievements [of our ancestors] very seriously, and aims to foster the development of the kinds of creativity that would honour the deeds of our forebears by striving to explore regions of possibilities that they could never reach, because of our access to technologies more advanced than those available to them, and to the variety of cultural influences that were beyond their reach. We learn from the great and wonderful products of human imagination and ingenuity the world over, but the cultural achievements of our own histories will be our most important models, points of reference, and sources of inspiration. This should help to bring out the best in us, while we remain true to ourselves. (Hau'ofa 2005)
This reveals that eight years after the centre was established, its directives were still vague and idealistic. The plan is hardly ‘corporate’ despite its title, probably strategically used by a director that did his best to control commercial opportunities. He emphasised artists’ freedom, only requiring accountability for their actions, which was a reference to mutual respect amongst artists in the shared spaces to foster a cooperative environment. Hau'ofa expanded upon this in an interview with Nicholas Thomas; he acknowledged the importance of freedom for the artists as one of the centre’s tenets “because their communities, as you know, are very restricting. The pressure for conformity is strong so we try to give these people a Pacific environment in which they are free to express themselves through their work.” (Thomas forthcoming) Hau'ofa’s desire to avoid conformity was negated by his desire to foster a space for collective art making where imitation was the means for learning techniques and the shared workspace meant that artists influenced one another which, at times, resulted in similar styles. For example, Abraham Lagi’s style is derivative of Lee’s as seen in a comparison of Lee’s Tokairabe and the Shark God (fig. 3.21) and Lagi’s Your Best Friend is Your Worst Enemy (2007) (fig. 3.22). Without a developed foundation in visual arts, some artists conformed to the styles and techniques introduced by Pule or other established artists in residence, thus creating the generic “Oceanic style” described by Watanabe. (2010, 122) Moreover, Hau'ofa’s limitation of where and when artists could exhibit was at odds with the giving them “complete freedom.”

The corporate plan also indicated that the centre encouraged artists to produce ‘Oceanic forms’ but there was no exemplification of what that was; it was only defined as original and transcendent of national and cultural diversity. By encouraging artists to draw from heritage and inviting Pule to present his style as a model for the artists, Hau'ofa suggested that ‘Oceanic forms’ could be found on masi or carvings. However, those forms and motifs were not original or transcendent of distinct groups even if the presentation and composition of such images was original. What the plan did acknowledge was that the centre encouraged artists to use any technology available, including Western materials, techniques, and technologies such as oil paints and welding. Did this conflict with Hau'ofa’s desire to foster a ‘distinctive Oceanic cultural identity’? I would argue not, because artists practicing in Suva were already exposed to Western technologies and products. By promoting a combination of Western media with Oceanic knowledge, the Oceania Centre encouraged art processes reflective of a contemporary Oceanic identity. However, like the Papua New Guinea case study, this was an urban
identity that made attempts to connect with the rural but was inextricably linked to the urban environment which provided opportunities for exhibitions and sales.

It is problematic that Hau‘ofa’s plan did not establish future objectives for the artists beyond cultural expression particularly when the artists did not seem to express or confront pan-Oceanic ideas or issues. Rather they communicated about culture through legends and stories, which does not necessarily offer any insights to contemporary Oceanic culture. Another conflict that arises from analysis of the corporate plan is the inconsistency between Hau‘ofa’s desire to develop Oceanic culture and the lack of diversity amongst the artists in residence who were chiefly Fijian. Although Hau‘ofa championed a “unity… that can bring us together” to be “confident in our varied heritage” (Hau‘ofa 2008b, 131), there was not much variety in the heritage of the artists at the Oceania Centre. While this was in part circumstantial, it was also because not everyone had experience with multiple identities as Hau‘ofa did. For Hau‘ofa had experienced many cultures: born in Papua New Guinea and identifying himself as Papuan until the age of eight; moving to Tonga at the age of nine, where he learned the language “but never really got into the culture of the country” (Thomas forthcoming); then attending secondary school in Fiji, where he again “re-identified” himself so that he was, as a university student in Australia, “considered a Fijian by everyone there.” (Thomas forthcoming) He explained: “Going back to the notion of identity and being a person of one place, I would not have developed the things that I’m doing now without that wider Pacific background.” (Thomas forthcoming) But others, especially those non-Fijians living in Suva, may have been looking for ways to hold on to specific aspects of their cultural identity be it Tongan, iKiribati, or ni-Vanuatu, and may not have recognised how the Oceania Centre could support them in this. Fraser observed that some Indo-Fijians “saw [the Oceania Centre] as an interesting thing… but it didn’t really speak to [them] and reflect enough of [their] culture.” (Fraser 2010)

Cultural differences and attitudes towards those differences could also explain the lack of female students and, arguably, sexism at the centre. However, as a visiting artist to the centre, I never experienced any sexism or negative attitudes from male artists as I worked alongside them. On the other hand, as an established professional in my field, I was not subject to the same standards for acceptance as a local artist might be. I think the Vasu catalogue offers a more likely answer: “the common feature of women artists [is] multiple workloads as artists with full-time jobs and families.” (Tarte et al. 2008, 10)
Despite the vague definitions that Hau’ofa offered about Oceanic culture, there were artists that identified with his vision and used it as a source of inspiration for their art. McNamara developed an approach to and style of art that depicted his interpretation of Oceanic identity. He explained:

[My styles are] Oceanic styles. [It] goes back to my childhood… growing up with Fijian parents it is part of who we are in Oceania. We call ourselves ‘people of Oceania’. If you are born in this part of the world, you feel part of this community, this place. I feel that the world itself is evolving; it is moving and everything is changing. But what [reveals] who you are is where you are born… It grabs from the essence of who I am in my being and I am trying to communicate to my audience that it does exist in them too… I believe that other people who are deeply rooted in their own culture or religion would see and sense the same things. (McNamara 2007a)

McNamara’s justification suggests that the issue may not be whether artists fulfil the aim of communicating Oceanic culture, rather the aim itself is flawed in its essentialism. *The Light of the World* (2004) (fig. 3.17) is one of his works that uses shapes and motifs that he identifies as pan-Oceanic, such as stylised mask-like forms and four petal flowers that can also symbolise birds, and uses multiple layers to express the dynamism of culture in Oceania. The layers gently overlap and different manifestations of iconography associated with Oceania are repeated throughout the composition to denote past, present, and future. Like Pule and Toganivalu, McNamara drew from *masi* and other culturally significant objects to inform the iconography he developed but he stylised the actual imagery in the paintings and removed them from their customary context to express his vision of Oceania that is never static.

For the most part, the Oceania Centre’s artist residencies did not function as a means of encouraging a nationalistic identity in the way that those in Papua New Guinea did. McNamara’s Fijian pride was evident through references to *masi* but he tried to modify the forms so that they could be identified in a more general sense as Oceanic, which complemented an intercultural dialogue expressed in his paintings.

Cultural exchange was fostered through the centre’s shared studio space, which required artists to interact and prompted discussion about style and content. Since the majority of artists were Fijian, most references were to Fijian culture or, in Fong’s case, political and social issues. In the shared spaces, artists came to recognise that each person’s interpretation of culture is unique – for some it was based in identity and spirituality, like McNamara, for others, like Fong, in politics and social issues, such as racial discrimination by indigenous Fijians expressed through the large sculpture, *The Way the World Should Be* (2004) (figs. 3.23 and 3.24). The eight metre high sculpture made from
car bonnets, mild steel rods, and galvanized pipe, was another response to George Speight’s actions during the 2000 coup d’état. Fong made the work in response to discrimination amongst Fiji’s indigenous and Indo-Fijian population by creating a sea creature with jaws that are always ready to chew others up and spit them out for personal gain. (Fong 2007) Fong focused on the political role that culture played in Fiji. While artists like McNamara shaped what they thought represented Oceanic culture, Fong confronted Fiji’s coup-culture by asserting that not all indigenous Fijians agree with the actions of a few.

Artists expressed or, in Fong’s case, confronted cultural issues in different ways. Visiting artists, like Pule, introduced different cultural concepts from Niuean culture, mostly through his use of motifs and references to hiapo, and informal discussions about New Zealand’s Pacific community and Pacific art in Auckland. Visiting artists were important for expanding the notion of Oceanic identity beyond a Fijian and/or Tongan understanding, aiding Hau’ofa’s vision and desire for artists to “to draw on far larger pools of cultural traits than those of our individual national lagoons” when creating Oceanic art. (Hau’ofa 2005) While cultural exchange was a tenet for the centre’s production, I believe that it was not realised to its full potential at the Oceania Centre because of the vague definitions of culture and the limited diversity amongst the artists, in terms of ethnicity.

Social and economic development

The Oceania Centre was initially intended as a government-sponsored tourism initiative (through the university) with underlying economic aspirations. Such a focus on promoting tourism through a cultural centre on campus was swiftly rejected by Hau’ofa and other staff at the university. Hau’ofa’s goals were based in the creative potential of Oceanians which would, in turn, have widespread social and economic benefits. I examine the inherent conflicts of the centre’s position as part of yet distinct from USP and how this affected the social and economic development of artists in residence.

Hau’ofa wanted to validate creative expression but he also wanted to increase the social status of contemporary artists in Oceania, and did so through residencies, in a similar way to Craig at the Creative Arts Centre using residencies to recognise the skills and talent of artists as professionals within the institution, although not working towards a diploma. While artists did not receive a degree or certification, they received a stipend and had access to some of the university’s resources. Fraser offered a perceptive
observation about how residencies were viewed by the university administration and by those who valued formal professional certification:

You can have your social justice programmes taking street kids in, but it needs to be just one element of it as opposed to the whole thing. And you should incorporate kids from other ethnic groups who might be interested in the arts, but they want to see an outcome. They want to be able to walk out of it after three years and say, ‘I have got a diploma out of this.’ Rather than, ‘I just spent three years hanging around the centre and I don’t really have anything to show of it. I can see my art there [but] it does not feed me, it does not give me a job.’

(Fraser 2010)

His comments return to the issue of a lack of diversity at the centre and the type of creative individuals that Hau'ofa set out to attract – unemployed young people. The Oceania Centre gained a reputation amongst what Fraser called ‘street kids’ for being a place to get paid to experiment with art. He implied that formal training programmes would have made the centre a place for professional development so that artists in residence could then enter the work force. While some artists may have left without skills or a job, others felt that the residency launched them on a successful career path. For instance, Toganivalu, Lee, and McNamara credit their long-term residency with giving them the resources and support to develop a professional career as visual artists even though they have since left the centre. I do agree with Fraser on other points, particularly that the centre gained a negative reputation in parts of the community. However, I must note that from my experience talking to community members about the centre in 2006 and 2007, that positive versus negative repute fell broadly into two camps - support of Hau'ofa versus support of the university’s administration respectively.

Overall, however, the perception that the centre was a place for ‘street kids’ did not help elevate the artists to professional status, which was one of the centre’s objectives. This type of inconsistency, even contradiction, seems problematic when contextualising the Oceania Centre’s role within the university; particularly when taking into consideration that the centre functioned as both a department and business. In terms of business dealings, the Red Wave artists have been criticised for unjustifiably high prices for art works. Both Pule and Fraser commented that they found it unreasonable that artists, with Hau'ofa’s direction or approval, charged and, at times, received upwards of FJ$2000 even when they had been painting less than a year. (Fraser 2010; Pule 2010) Of course, some artists had been honing their skills for many years as long-term artists in residence and working towards those prices, but others, just beginning, applied the same prices. Setting prices without a rationale was detrimental
because it set a false plateau. But despite this, many of the artists regularly sold work. The high prices for paintings can be attributed to Hau'ofa’s lack of experience in commercial creative industries paired with his confidence in the artists’ ingenuity, even if others disagreed. He felt in principle that the art works should earn high prices.

While local and international commercial opportunities and advertising would have brought more patronage to the Oceania Centre, the local market supported the artists reasonably well. In Suva, as in Port Moresby and the Cook Islands, the local elite, expatriate community and tourists purchased the contemporary art being produced at the Oceania Centre. Like Narokobi’s commentary on those purchasing contemporary art in Papua New Guinea, Vaka’uta explained: “The only locals who buy are the upper class – most people do not have the money to [spend on] art… Except for the couple of pieces that Epeli has purchased for the Centre’s collection, most has gone overseas [with tourists].” (Vaka’uta 2006) Fraser agreed and remarked that it was the waves of expatriates coming through Suva that financially sustained the artists in residence:

You have a fresh wave of expatriates saying, ‘Wow, this is amazing art and very Pacific and we’ve never seen this type of art before.’ Then before they can get sick of it, they leave. And then a new wave, so you know, all it does is perpetuate this idea in these kids’ heads that they are amazing artists until they go somewhere like London or Auckland and they suddenly see other artists and say well I actually know very little. (Fraser 2010)

It is evident that Fraser felt that the Oceania Centre was creating a false sense of security for the artists in residence, but it must also be acknowledged that some artists achieved other markets for their work. Several works were sold in London, including one of McNamara’s large paintings. Irami Buli sold paintings in New Delhi, India in 2005, and Mason Lee has also sold works through his dealer gallery o’kaioceanikart in Auckland.86

Although the Oceania Centre functioned as a business to support the Red Wave artists, in addition to the dance and music ventures, Hau’ofa did not want to be indebted to anyone that would entice the Oceania Centre into bureaucratic or commercial mêlées. Therefore, he limited the Centre’s external partnerships, as with hotels and resorts where many independent artists exhibit and sell work. This limited opportunities for long-term artists in residence because they were isolated and made dependent on Hau’ofa. While Hau’ofa felt that he was ensuring the artists’ creative freedom by protecting them from commercialisation, he was also promoting the Red Wave Collective as a unit and

86 Hau’ofa personally purchased, in his own words, “the best works” produced by the artists in residence. He had no strategy for collecting; he said that if the artists came to him asking for money, he would buy a work. It is unclear what will happen to his personal collection, whether it will remain at the Oceania Centre or whether Barbara Hau’ofa has other intentions.
asserting cohesion in what falls between a brand and a style of art. The purpose of and cohesion amongst the Red Wave Collective remained ambiguous. In spite of this, the Red Wave Collective brand meant that new artists benefited from the reputation of long-term artists in residence by association, particularly when establishing pricing for art works.

Artist residencies at the Oceania Centre provided the resources for artists to develop skills and launch careers as contemporary artists in Fiji. Artists associated with the Oceania Centre and Hau‘ofa were respected within and beyond Suva for their contribution to a uniquely Oceanic style, even if that was never clearly defined. Similar to those in Papua New Guinea, the artist residencies at the Oceania Centre were not exceedingly lucrative, as patronage was limited by the restrictions of the local market and Hau‘ofa’s efforts to prevent commercialisation. Yet most participants have acknowledged the value of the centre in starting their careers, even if they have left in search of other opportunities like Toganivalu and Lee. McNamara has still utilised the centre’s resources and exhibited with the Red Wave Collective, although not an active artist in residence. And others like Fong and McNamara have continued their association with the Centre, finding it beneficial.

**Chapter Summary**

From 1997 until 2009, artist residencies at the Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture at USP were similar to those in Papua New Guinea yet aspired to serve creative individuals beyond the country’s borders to promote regionalism. If the Beiers were indeed selling a ‘gimmick’ as Wyckom alleged, (Plocki 1976) then Hau‘ofa bought it and used it to develop a programme to complement his vision for Oceanic arts. His vision was idealistic and, interestingly, aligned with some of the romantic ideas in Georgina Beier’s writing, such as her description of “Outsider artists” in Port Moresby: “[The artist] works in a new and foreign medium and because of that there are no rules for him to follow. He has eluded the restraints of ‘academic’ training or cultural conventions.” (G. Beier 1977, 3) For Hau‘ofa, the vision was important to activate the idea that the strength of the ocean could act as a bond across the region. However, I have concluded through this case study that Hau‘ofa was unsuccessful in fostering a significant bond amongst Oceanic artists since the majority of those practicing at the Oceania Centre were Fijian. As the primary stakeholder and driver for the Oceania Centre, his ideas and influence are evident, but that control was also problematic because it was essentially a
personal conquest rather than an approach that invited institutional dialogue and cooperation. I believe that the Oceania Centre was a beginning of realising a vision to empower Oceania by fostering contemporary arts reflective of the diverse and dynamic cultures across the region. Unfortunately Hau’ofa did not initiate the next step. He believed that his vision would launch other initiatives; it was never meant to end with him yet this was undermined by his desire for autonomy.

The lack of specific directives and oversight from experienced arts professionals within or outside of the centre, seem to have been significant factors that prevented the artist residencies from becoming a dynamic opportunity for artistic and cultural exchange. Hau’ofa transformed Beier’s concept of a ‘residency’ that was intended to launch careers into a permanent job for some of the artists. He claimed that their resources were limited, yet his distinguished reputation had the potential to afford him a range of international connections and opportunities that could have benefited the artists. Perhaps this is another repercussion of his lack of experience with the arts.

The workshop environment was intended as a substitute for institutionalised teaching. However, prior to becoming artists in residence, the participants had little or no experience other than the centre’s workshops and so they had little to build upon. The shared studio space caused imitation as well as competition, in that artists wanted their work to be distinctive. For example, McNamara was motivated to change his style from grid-format because Pule’s workshop and the shared studio challenged him to create a more distinctive style. Examining the paintings produced by artists in residence at the Oceania Centre during Hau’ofa’s tenure, I underscored both differences and similarities amongst the artists’ styles. It is apparent that some maintained a style that seemed to sell. The art works might have seemed innovative to waves of tourists and expatriates passing through, but many artists reached a plateau or, as Lee explained, felt complacent. Lee remarked that although he had the freedom to experiment at the Oceania Centre, it was the pressure of an independent career that pushed him to refine his practice and skills. (Lee 2010)

Pule remarked that in the later years of Hau’ofa’s directorship, the artists in residence were becoming anxious. They wanted to take their art to another level and reach wider audiences but Hau’ofa’s lack of experience in the arts meant that he continued to encourage artists in the same way he had since 1998 by telling them, “Look to your culture for inspiration.” Pule provided a poignant synopsis about Hau’ofa’s
method of facilitating artistic growth at the centre: “Epeli let them grow, but like bonsai.” (Pule 2010)

Despite what I assess as an inadequate residency model in comparison with other examples, the Oceania Centre has nurtured an organic programme and process in which each of the artistic practices feed into the other: visual artists dance, dancers compose music, and musicians paint. Although those interdisciplinary artistic exchanges are not central to my analysis of visual arts residencies, exchanges across art forms were part of Hau’ofa’s effort to create dynamic Oceanic arts. Shared workspaces created a workshop environment where experimentation and peer-support fostered artistic and cultural exchange that was augmented by visiting artists. Holding a long-term residency meant that artists established credentials to participate in or apply to international art programmes that required professional experience. Hau’ofa strategically balanced association with the university and autonomy from it, which meant that the centre was continuously funded, and artists had access to resources such as the university library and staff, but long-term artists in residence were not subject to assessment by the university. Although there were incongruous elements at play during Hau’ofa’s tenure, the new director Hereniko has proposed to continue many of Hau’ofa’s initiatives, which is a testament to his achievements.77 (V. Hereniko 2010)

77 Most of the long-term artists in residence that left have not returned to the centre even though Hereniko is now the director.
CHAPTER IV: HOMECOMINGS AND ARTIST RESIDENCIES IN THE COOK ISLANDS

Introduction

Artist residencies in Rarotonga, Cook Islands, are a key case study in this examination of residencies in Oceania because of the range of residencies that have occurred there: three distinct residency schemes for local and visiting artists have taken place between 2001 and 2010. Unlike the residencies in Papua New Guinea and Fiji that were directed at untrained creative individuals and fostered artistic development in a relatively unstructured workshop environment, those in Rarotonga fit within what I have defined as short-term or conventional residencies because the programmes had specified durations of six weeks to three months, distinct expectations such as conducting workshops and exhibitions, and funding provided for travel, living, and material costs. These residencies were also designed to foster artistic development both for the visiting or local artists awarded the residencies, and local artists and community.

Three different types of sponsorship are introduced in this chapter: an international partnership between governmental agencies – the Cook Islands Ministry of Cultural Development and Creative New Zealand residency (2001-2006) (New Zealand’s arts development agency’s first external residency specifically for New Zealand-based artists of Pacific heritage); a public/private partnership – the Bank of the Cook Islands residency with the Ministry of Cultural Development (2002-2004); and a privately-funded residency by the commercial art gallery Beachcomber Contemporary Art (2002-present).78 These residencies emphasise different types of exchange through the artists invited for each residency, namely New Zealand artists to the Cook Islands, local artists, and local and international artists respectively. Overall, the three residency programmes have brought eight artists from New Zealand and an American artist based in Mexico, and provided residencies for three Rarotonga-based Cook Islands artists. I focus on the experience of six artists but also refer to others in order to demonstrate the individuality of each residency experience. I discuss how the residencies have been significant to both visiting and local artists by evaluating the artistic and cultural exchanges. Analysis of these residencies indicates the impact that Cook Islands culture and environment has had on some of the artists’ work during and after the residency. Since these residencies are discreet experiences in each of the artists’ careers unlike the long-term residencies in

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78 In an effort to simplify the lengthy names of each residency, I refer to them as: Creative New Zealand residency, Bank of the Cook Islands residency, and Beachcomber Contemporary Art residency. This is not intended to minimise the commitment or importance of the Ministry of Cultural Development.
Papua New Guinea and Fiji, I pay particular attention to their intentions, expectations, and the way that they handled the experience and utilised resources. Additionally, I also focus on how the residencies and introduction of new artists contributed to the development of the arts community in Rarotonga.

There have been a number of other programmes in Rarotonga including artist workshops conducted by Nicolai Michoutouchkine and Aloi Pilioko at the University of the South Pacific (USP) satellite campus, independently planned and funded trips to the Cook Islands to work by artists such as Ani O’Neill and Michel Tuffery, and the Bank of Cook Islands In-Country Training Programme which were workshops conducted by New Zealand-based artists, John Pule and Richard Shortland-Cooper.79 (Chappell 2003; Tangaroa 2009b) With such a wide range of endeavours by and for visual artists, it was necessary to focus on programmes that illustrate the range offered in Rarotonga but also relate to the main research paradigms of sponsorship, artistic innovation, cultural exchange, and social and economic development.

Within the three residency schemes, it seemed appropriate to match the number of artists for analysis with the Papua New Guinea and Fiji case studies, while also effectively representing each residency programme. A pragmatic means for selection was to focus on Creative New Zealand’s residency, which serves as a comparison with Creative New Zealand’s residencies in Sāmoa (Chapter V), and then highlight one example from each of the remaining two residencies in the Cook Islands to evaluate the subsequent initiatives. Consistent with the other case studies, I focus on the first four artists awarded the Creative New Zealand residency: Veronica Vaevae (2001), Fatu Feu’u (2002), Sylvia Marsters (2003), and Filipe Tohi (2004). However, in an effort to draw attention to the overall characteristics of the other residencies, I selected the second artist in residence of each to highlight the development of these programmes: Tim Manarova Buchanan (2003 – Bank of the Cook Islands) and Andy Leleisi’uao (2009 – Beachcomber Contemporary Art). Buchanan is a Cook Islands Maori artist based in Rarotonga; the other five artists are New Zealand-based artists of Pacific heritage. These selections are also representative of a variety of accomplishments and challenges over the course of the residency schemes.

79 The Bank of the Cook Islands In-Country Training Programme has been referred to as a residency by the visiting artists, but their primary function was to conduct workshops. This is similar to Pule’s role at the Oceania Centre but I analyse the bank’s other residency programme for local artists to demonstrate different residency models.
Other artists that have been awarded the residencies are: Creative New Zealand’s residency – Johnny Peninsula (2005) and Nanette Lela’ulu (2006); the Bank of the Cook Islands residency – Eruera ‘Ted’ Nia (2002); Beachcomber Contemporary Art residency – Mahiriki Tangaroa (2002), Rick Welland (2010), and Reuben Paterson (2010).80

Following a brief introduction to the Cook Islands, sponsorship and criteria are discussed and then the individual residencies, with an introduction to the artists and descriptions of their residencies to demonstrate the range of experiences. With three residency programmes in Rarotonga between 2001 and 2010, this case study is more complicated than single or interrelated programmes in other locations. However, the variety of residencies provides valuable points of departure for a discussion of issues including artistic growth and innovation, social and economic development, and cultural exchange. This examination of artist residencies in Rarotonga is informed by various forms of documentation, including books, articles, completion reports, evaluation reports from Creative New Zealand, and interviews with each of the artists.81 The Cook Islands News was a valuable source for reviews of the residencies and associated exhibitions. Sociologist Katherine Giuffre’s Collective Creativity: art and society in the South Pacific (2009) provided a constructive analysis of the polemics within the arts community in Rarotonga. Giuffre’s book highlights numerous conflicts between groups of artists; I do not refer to those issues because my research focuses on the function of residencies in the community and region rather than specific relationships between artists.

Situating the Cook Islands

The Cook Islands consist of fifteen islands in central Oceania. The northern coral atolls and the southern islands of volcanic origin span 2,200,000 sq km of ocean. Settlement of the Cook Islands dates back 2000 years and the indigenous people, Cook Island Maori, are genealogically related to Aotearoa’s Māori. Rarotonga, the capital island

80 I wanted to include Lela’ulu because several people remarked that she faced difficulties due to miscommunication, (Maui 2009) described by some as the reason that the Creative New Zealand Residency was discontinued, (George 2009; Oberg 2008; Tangaroa 2009b) although others disagreed, stating that the residency was discontinued because it had fulfilled its goals. (Carter 2009; Maui 2009) I contacted Lela’ulu on several occasions to interview her about the experience but she declined and also prohibited Creative New Zealand from releasing her completion report. Without satisfactory information, I could not include a balanced report. Although Mexico-based American Rick Welland’s experience would seem to add diversity to the range of artists highlighted here, he seemed an inappropriate example for a thesis focused on the experience of indigenous artists. Moreover, because Welland had lived in Rarotonga for nearly thirty years (1962-1990) his residency was spent reproducing imagery and subjects from that era as well as reconnecting with family members and friends.

81 Creative New Zealand’s reports were provided with permission from the artists. While the reports provide valuable information, certain reports were not released at the request of the artist. Personal interviews were held with all the artists and administrators except Vaevae, who was interviewed via emails.
located in the southern group, has more than half of the resident population of 21,000. (Population Estimates and Vital Statistics 2009, 1) The largest population of Cook Islanders live abroad; New Zealand was home to just under 58,000 Cook Islanders in 2006. (Statistics New Zealand 2006b)

A British protectorate in 1888 and annexed by New Zealand in 1901, the Cook Islands became self-governing in 1965. The Cook Islands are in free association with New Zealand, meaning Cook Islanders have dual citizenship, with certain conditions. (Crocombe 2001, 688; Lal and Fortune 2000, 562-564) With the opening of the international airport on Rarotonga in 1974, a high proportion of Cook Islanders left to pursue employment opportunities in New Zealand, where they have remained, while large numbers of tourists visited the Cook Islands. (Crocombe 2001, 194) Tourism has become the country’s main industry, primarily socially and economically shaping the islands, particularly Rarotonga and Aitutaki.

Contemporary visual art has had a presence and audience in the Cook Islands since the 1960s when Americans Rick Welland and Edwin Shorter were living in Rarotonga and painting scenes of island life. Although the artists’ styles were different, they shared thematic similarities such as celebrating and, at times, idealising Cook Islands culture and lifestyle with depictions of legends or landscapes often featuring Cook Islands maidens. (Bergman 2009b) Welland and Shorter maintained their artistic practice with patronage from tourists and local elite. Welland departed in 1990 and Shorter died in 1998. Welland returned to Rarotonga for a six-week artist residency at Beachcomber Contemporary Art in 2010.

Nga Teariki is acknowledged as the first Cook Islands artist to maintain a fulltime practice working in modern materials. (Carr 2007; P. Hereniko 1986) Teariki’s first exhibition was in 1978 and marked the beginning of a growing number of careers for Cook Islands contemporary artists, including carver, painter, and poet Michael Tavioni. Not all Cook Islands artists were permanently based in Rarotonga like Teariki; New Zealand-born Cook Islander Ian George exhibited sculptures and paintings in Rarotonga while on extended visits from New Zealand during the 1980s, before he relocated to Rarotonga with his wife, artist Kay George, in 2002 to open The Art Studio, a private gallery. Ani O’Neill regularly visited family in Rarotonga and her artistic practice has been informed by her time in the Cook Islands. For example, while she was a student at Elam

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82 The second largest industry is pearl farming while fishing and agriculture are minor sources of the country’s overall wealth. (Crocombe 2001, 688; Lal and Fortune 2000, 562-564)
School of Fine Arts, University of Auckland in the early 1990s, she arranged an apprenticeship with Tavioni to learn more about Cook Islands carving. (O'Neill 2009)

In 1998, Ian George co-curated an exhibition of New Zealand-based Cook Islands artists called, *Paringa On*. The exhibition included Mahiriki Tangaroa, Sylvia Marsters, Ian George, and fourteen other artists of Cook Islands heritage. First shown in Rarotonga, it travelled to the Fiji Museum in Suva and Fisher Gallery in Pakuranga, New Zealand. The art works explored the duality of New Zealand-Cook Islands identity and so, in George’s words, “The artworks travelling to the islands was not only restoring a spiritual absence, but in a sense positing a spiritual revival from what had been created by Cook Islanders away from ‘home’.” (Art, Repatriation & Reaffirming Identities 2004, 15)

For Tangaroa, the exhibition was a homecoming. She travelled to Rarotonga for the exhibition and stayed to make her life there. The combination of artists established in or visiting Rarotonga created circumstances that were propitious for residencies to take place.

In the early 1990s, New Zealand-born Cook Islander Tim Manarova Buchanan moved to Rarotonga. Buchanan’s arrival marked the beginning of a growing reverse migration to the Cook Islands by artists born and educated in New Zealand. In the late 1990s, Eruera ‘Ted’ Nia moved to Rarotonga, followed by Mahiriki Tangaroa in 1998, Ian and Kay George in 2002, and Ani O’Neill in 2006. These New Zealand-born Cook Islands artists have played important roles in establishing a prominent contemporary art scene in Rarotonga and facilitating the residencies due to the skills and experience each brought from New Zealand and other places they studied, trained, and/or worked. Their involvement in residencies was only a portion of their efforts to build a supportive and vigorous arts community in Rarotonga. In different ways, these returned Cook Islanders have demonstrated that contemporary art was not only a career for expatriates. They proved that Cook Islands artists were more than capable of creating, exhibiting, and selling art works to an international audience. They gained respect for their artistic practice at home and abroad as their work is directly inspired by the strength of their culture and pride in the Cook Islands.

**Sponsors**

Shortly after her arrival, Mahiriki Tangaroa was hired as curator at the Cook Islands National Museum in 1999. Tangaroa had studied photography at Ilam School of Fine Arts at University of Canterbury (1995-1998) where the Creative New Zealand and
Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies Artist Residency was established in 1996. She felt that an artist residency programme similar to Macmillan Brown’s would benefit local artists in Rarotonga as well as the museum if the Ministry of Cultural Development that administered the museum, could partner with and receive funding from an organisation like Creative New Zealand. (Tangaroa 2000, 2009b) Creative New Zealand shared an interest in establishing a residency and so in 2001 they partnered with the Ministry of Cultural Development to fund a visual arts residency in Rarotonga for New Zealand-based artists of Pacific heritage.

Tangaroa was closely connected with all three residencies. She initiated and administered the Ministry of Cultural Development and Creative New Zealand residency in 2001 and 2002, and established the Ministry of Cultural Development and Bank of Cook Islands residency in 2002. In late 2002, she took three months leave from the museum to develop her artistic practice and was offered and accepted the inaugural Beachcomber Contemporary Art residency. (Carr 2002c) After the residency, she resigned from the museum and became Beachcomber Contemporary Art’s art director until January 2004 when she decided to focus on painting as a fulltime career. (Tangaroa 2011) She was represented by the gallery from 2002 until 2010.83 At the end of 2010, Tangaroa was re-hired by the museum. Her evaluation reflects her experiences as sponsor/host, recipient, and participant of residencies. Her complicated position within this case study is indicative of Rarotonga’s relatively small arts industry.

Ian George’s contribution to forming and sustaining residencies in Rarotonga was less obvious than Tangaroa’s. He supported the Ministry of Cultural Development’s proposal to Creative New Zealand while he was based in New Zealand where he was completing a Masters of Fine Arts at Elam School of Fine Arts, University of Auckland. After 2002, when he had moved to Rarotonga, he advised the Ministry of Cultural Development regarding the residency and assisted visiting artists, many of whom he knew from New Zealand. (George 2009)

Anton Carter was the primary Creative New Zealand representative for the residency with the Ministry of Cultural Development as the New Zealand organisation’s Pacific Arts Advisor (1998-2010). He was instrumental in establishing Creative New Zealand residencies in the Pacific Islands, coordinated with Tangaroa to propose the residency in the Cook Islands and initiated the subsequent residency in Sāmoa (Chapter

83 Tangaroa was represented by Beachcomber Gallery under the management of the original owners David and Joan Gragg from 1998 until 2001 and then represented under Bergman’s ownership from 2002. Tangaroa has also been represented by galleries in New Zealand since 2000. (Tangaroa 2011)
Handling the New Zealand-based administration of the residencies in the early years, Carter conducted evaluations of the programmes, and worked with Pacific artists and communities within and outside of New Zealand.

After only two New Zealand-based artists in residence, local businesses in Rarotonga recognised that residencies provided an opportunity to invest in the development of Cook Islands visual arts. In 2002, the Bank of the Cook Islands also partnered with the Ministry of Cultural Development to sponsor a residency for local artists as well as an in-country training programme which brought New Zealand-based artists to Rarotonga to conduct workshops for local artists. When Tangaroa left the museum after the first residency in 2003, Ngatiuane Maui, anthropologist at the National Museum, took over local administration of both the Ministry of Cultural Development sponsored residencies, both with Creative New Zealand and with the Bank of the Cook Islands, and continued the programme and processes that Tangaroa established.

In 2002, a third type of residency scheme was a private initiative by Beachcomber Contemporary Art (known as Beachcomber Gallery until 2009), a commercial gallery that at the time represented artists from the Cook Islands, Niue, and New Zealand. Beachcomber Contemporary Art’s residency did not occur again until 2009, as explained in subsequent sections. This residency was administered by the gallery’s director Ben Bergman.

The international partnership, public/private partnership, and private initiative underscore a range of conditions that demonstrate different opportunities for artists through residencies in Rarotonga since 2001. Their differences provide an opportunity to compare different forms of sponsorship and residency programming.

84 The Bank of the Cook Islands In-country Training Programme was a direct means of developing a local arts community because visiting artists were required to use the two weeks efficiently and fulfil their obligation. While the premise was not personal artistic development for the visiting artist, this is not to say that the artists’ practice did not benefit from the experience and that it was not a great opportunity to visit a beautiful island with a growing and involved arts community. The in-country training programme provided airfare, accommodation, materials, and a stipend for the visiting artist. Māori and Cook Islander Richard Shortland-Cooper conducted the in-country training programme in 2002 and New Zealand-based Niuean artist and writer John Pule was invited to conduct workshop in 2003. Pule had experience directing workshops, most notably those at the Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture during the late 1990s. While in Rarotonga, Pule painted several works that were exhibited with the students’ work at the National Museum at the conclusion of the workshop, proving a productive experience for the visiting artist as well as the local participants. Local patrons sponsored school students so that they would have the materials to participate in the workshop, showing that patronage of the arts was becoming more frequent. Loretta Reynolds, Ben Bergman, and Glenn Mills sponsored the school students. (Carr 2004)
Ministry of Cultural Development and Creative New Zealand Artist residency 2001-2006

The Cook Islands Ministry of Cultural Development’s central objectives are to preserve traditional knowledge, protect intellectual property, and promote the dynamics of Cook Islands culture, which contribute to national pride and identity. (Marurai 2002)

Tangaroa’s intention was to invite New Zealand artists to Rarotonga to expose local artists to different art forms and trends and to involve Cook Islands artists in the international art world. In her own words:

The whole idea for the residency was to have Pacific artists from New Zealand spend three months here on Rarotonga, conduct workshops and [host] their own solo exhibition here. There were a number of reasons for initiating the project. Firstly was to establish... a vibrant art community [in Rarotonga], it was something I felt was not a focus here. The arts were sort of something peripheral, not [a] priority and in my role as curator, one of the objectives, one of the [expected] outputs was to host exhibitions and artists workshops. At the time an artist in residence was [the] perfect way of encouraging artists here, encouraging [the] community to become more involved in the arts, and to have a regular workshop happening each year. It wouldn’t be just a one off... (Tangaroa 2009b)

Tangaroa’s desire to establish a vibrant art community in Rarotonga by drawing on the skills of New Zealand-based artists is indicative of her belief that New Zealand’s Pacific artists could serve as a model for Cook Islands artists despite Rarotonga’s small island community. She proposed an artist residency based in Rarotonga to Anton Carter, Pacific Arts Advisor for Creative New Zealand, and Dr. Takiora Ingram, Chair of Pacific Arts Committee and Cook Islands representative to Creative New Zealand, in Wellington.

Since 1996, Creative New Zealand has sponsored and administered artist residencies to meet the organisation’s goals to foster the practice of New Zealand artists, enhance their careers, and build networks. The residency in the Cook Islands was not the organisation’s first; Creative New Zealand has sponsored the Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies Artist Residency (1996-present) for artists of Pacific heritage, and international residencies at established residential arts centres: a twelve-month Berlin Visual Arts residency (biennially 2000-present) and four-month residency at the International Studio in New York (biennially 2000-present). Residencies were primarily administered through Creative New Zealand’s three boards: the Arts Board, Te Waka

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85 They also provide financial support for New Zealand artists to undertake international residencies with other organisations through project funding. For example, New Zealand-based Niuean artist Glenda Vilisoni received funding to undertake a self-organised residency in Niue in 2008. (Vilisoni 2009)

86 The Berlin and New York residencies were quite different from the Cook Islands residency because the partner organisations in Berlin and New York had extensive experience with artists in residence, among other reasons.
Toi (Māori Arts Board), and the Pacific Arts Committee. The Pacific Arts Committee’s role within Creative New Zealand, during the time of the Cook Islands residencies, was to develop New Zealand’s art and artists by investing in “contestable project funding, developing initiatives and delivering tailored programmes to support Pacific artists and communities.” (Creative New Zealand 2007, 34) Residencies were one of the strategies to invest in to “facilitate the development of new forms of Pacific expression… [and] to enhance Pacific identity in New Zealand.” (Creative New Zealand 2007, 48) A residency in the Cook Islands could achieve this by connecting New Zealand-based artists with arts communities in the islands, an issue raised by both sponsors and artists in the evaluation of the Creative New Zealand residency.

From a Creative New Zealand perspective, Carter felt that a residency in the Cook Islands would be relevant and respond to the needs of New Zealand artists of Pacific heritage:

One thing I had observed, which might seem quite obvious, was that a lot of the artists or people who applied [for funding] to the Pacific Arts Committee actually wanted to return back to their home islands to look at… reconnecting culturally or trying to research or learn about some specific aspect of… art and culture, whether it’s carving or weaving technique or research into tapa technology. So it kind of seemed quite obvious to me that looking at building a residency achieved a number of goals for Creative New Zealand, for the artists, and also potentially allowed us to partner with other people. (Carter 2009)

The reciprocal exchange aligns with a shift in artistic and cultural exchange rather than a main focus on training, as was the case in Papua New Guinea and Fiji. Carter explained that the Pacific Arts Committee wanted to provide an opportunity for New Zealand-based artists of Pacific heritage to “reconnect culturally” with, research, or learn about aspects of Cook Islands art and culture. Creative New Zealand’s decisions are based on organisational strategies such as fostering cultural engagement between the countries and reflect commitments to the nation. (Carter 2009)

The Cook Islands Ministry of Cultural Development and Creative New Zealand recognised that sponsorship of an artist residency was a valuable investment in artists as well as an opportunity to create a mutually beneficial partnership with a neighbouring country. They launched the residency as a three-year pilot programme. Carter explained that this allowed for rotation, which is important because, while other residencies (New York and Berlin) continue to roll over, pilot programmes allowed investors and sponsors to see how the programme developed. They can then invest in a further three years.

87 In 2010, Creative New Zealand streamlined the three boards into a single board that includes Māori and Pacific representatives. The changes do not affect the residencies described in this research.
which was a unique feature of Creative New Zealand’s Pacific residencies, thereby extending the residency to six years in total. Carter also advocated moving residencies to other locations so that the effects would reach beyond one island or Pacific nation. (Carter 2009) This was demonstrated by the residency established with the National University of Sāmoa (2007-present) upon the conclusion of the Cook Islands residency.

Creative New Zealand followed the precedent of its residency at the Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies and provided travel, living stipend, and materials, as well as New Zealand-based administration for the Cook Island programme. The Ministry of Cultural Development provided accommodation, studio space, exhibition space and resources, and local administrative support by National Museum staff.

Expanding sponsorship: the Bank of the Cook Islands and Ministry of Cultural Development residency 2002-2004

The Creative New Zealand residency garnered significant attention from the first announcement that a New Zealand-based artist would be based at the National Museum for three months in 2001. Through her role at the National Museum, Tangaroa encouraged local businesses like the Bank of the Cook Islands to sponsor programmes so that local artists would have similar opportunities, as a means of raising the confidence and profile of Cook Islands artists. The Bank of the Cook Islands offered its patronage for two programmes: an artist residency and an in-country training programme of artist workshops for local artists from 2002 to 2004, which were co-sponsored by the Ministry of Cultural Development. Bank of the Cook Islands board director August Meyer said that the bank decided “not to follow other banks with sport, but instead support the arts… it goes in line with our concept of ‘for the people by the people.’”(Koteka 2002a) Although Meyer’s comments indicate that the bank was conscious of the positive publicity that the investment would create, its involvement was primarily financial. The National Museum and Ministry of Cultural Development oversaw the organisation and administration of the residency. Maui managed the programme after Tangaroa resigned from the museum, she described as practical and manageable due to a similar structure to the Creative New Zealand residency. (Maui 2009) The residency provided monthly stipend, materials, studio space, and an exhibition to conclude the residency.

In 2002, Tangaroa explained that the aim of the residency was to create an opportunity “for local artists to live off their work,” (Koteka 2002b) meaning that artists would have the financial backing to focus on their artistic practice. She elaborated that
private investors (commercial or individual), such as the Bank of the Cook Islands, have
invested in the visual arts because they want to encourage something that identifies Cook
Islands arts and “since the arts are a reflection of the culture, of the nation, [and] of the
country… if we’re [all producing] something wonderful [together,] we’re all going to
[share in the benefits].” (Tangaroa 2009b) While the artistic and cultural exchange
spurred by the Creative New Zealand residencies was important and beneficial for the
local arts scene, it became apparent that it was also necessary to recognise local skills and
creativity rather than relying on external stimulus.

Private funding: Beachcomber Contemporary Art residency 2002-present

In 2002, Beachcomber Contemporary Art also decided to sponsor an artist
residency. As one of two commercial galleries in Rarotonga at the time, Beachcomber
Contemporary Art was involved with various arts initiatives and had exhibited artwork by
artists in the other residency programmes. Ben Bergman, the gallery’s owner and director,
is an Australian whose family moved to Rarotonga when he was a child. He branched out
from commercial real estate and his family’s pearl businesses to pursue his personal
interest in contemporary art. The gallery aims to encourage and support local and
international contemporary art in the Cook Islands. (Bergman 2009a)

Bergman decided to host a residency to play a part in maintaining the momentum
that the Creative New Zealand residency stimulated because he knew that external
sponsorship from Creative New Zealand would not “go on forever.” (Bergman 2009a)
He remarked, “we had all these [residencies], all this growth, and now it’s not just going
to stop here.” (Bergman 2009a) Beachcomber Contemporary Art’s residency was aimed
at providing opportunities for artists represented by the gallery and elevating
contemporary art in Rarotonga. A major point of difference between this residency and
those at the Ministry of Cultural Development was that, as a commercial gallery,
Beachcomber Contemporary Art was motivated by a strategic directive to generate sales
through an exhibition at the end of the residency, from which the gallery took
commission. This was evident in the structure of the residency that did not have
requirements for public programming like art workshops required by the other
residencies in Rarotonga. The Beachcomber Contemporary Art residency met travel
costs for artists in residence and provided accommodation, living stipend, materials, and
a solo exhibition upon conclusion of the residency. Aside from the first residency, which
was for three months, the Beachcomber Contemporary Art residencies have typically been six weeks long.

Beachcomber Contemporary Art’s inaugural artist in residence was Tangaroa in 2002, but the next did not take place until September 2009. Bergman remarked that the reason for the long hiatus was due to remodelling of the gallery space and the preferred artist’s availability. (Bergman 2009a) New Zealand-born Samoan Andy Leleisi’uao’s 2009 residency began a renewed and more consistent residency programme, American artist Rick Welland and Māori artist Reuben Paterson (Ngati Rangitihi/ Ngai Tuhoe) held individual residencies in 2010. Two residencies scheduled for 2011 are New York-based Columbian artist Yazmani Arboleda and New Zealand-born Cook Islander/Samoan/Tahitian Michel Tuffery. (Bergman 2010)

The objectives of the Beachcomber Contemporary Art residency aligned with the gallery’s goals to challenge local understanding of and preference for art by developing multi-layered dimensions of contemporary art practice. (Bergman 2009a) Bergman explained that this meant encouraging an appreciation of the ability of art to communicate obvious emotion in a less noticeable way. (Bergman 2009a) Bergman wanted to create opportunities for contemporary artists in the Cook Islands and attract international artists to exhibit provocative contemporary visual art in Rarotonga; for instance, social and political commentary in paintings by New Zealand-born Samoan Andy Leleisi’uao or digital installation by Korean New York-based Hye Rim Lee. However, this is not to say that Beachcomber Contemporary Art did not cater to the popular aesthetic and market for realistic imagery of island landscapes. Bergman tried to achieve a balance between the two, a balance driven by commercial imperatives, personal aesthetic judgement, and cultural responsibilities.

The residency was not without strings attached. Thus far, it has been for artists represented by the gallery – Tangaroa (2003), Leleisi’uao (2009), and Welland (2010) – and it retained the works produced during the residency to sell and took commission on sales. 88 Although not represented by Beachcomber Contemporary Art, Reuben Paterson exhibited works made during the residency at the gallery, which retained commission. Only two of Paterson’s works were unsold and they remained as stock for the gallery. This is a major point of difference and perhaps contention between the public and private residencies in the Cook Islands. The National Museum took commission from works sold during exhibitions that marked the end of residencies co-sponsored by the

88 Tangaroa, Leleisi’uao, and Welland are also represented by other dealer galleries outside of Rarotonga.
Ministry of Cultural Development. However, artists had the freedom to do what they wanted with their art works, as the museum did not require artists to make work available for sale.

Criteria

The Creative New Zealand residency had the most specific criteria of all the residency schemes in the Cook Islands. The criteria were also influenced by the designers of the residency, specifically Tangaroa, Carter, and members of the Pacific Arts Committee. The “Pacific Islands Artist-in-residency Pilot Scheme” (2000) specified the criteria for applicants: works within visual arts field, has reached a level of professional experience, has a history of professional exhibitions and/or has participated in a residency, must be of Pacific Island heritage, and must have clear idea/project outline for residency. (Tangaroa 2000, 2) The criteria were similar to those for the Macmillan Brown residency. Creative New Zealand added the specifications that applicants must be residents of New Zealand, work with local artists and students in the Cook Islands, and submit a completion report at the conclusion of the residency. Artists awarded this residency were required to spend three months in Rarotonga, create a body of work for exhibition at the National Museum, and conduct workshops and/or hold presentations for local artists and/or students.

Tangaroa felt it was essential that artists in residence had Pacific heritage because she believed that local artists would identify with visiting artists of a similar heritage and avoid the visiting artists “alienating” the Cook Islands artists. (Tangaroa 2009b) From Creative New Zealand’s perspective, creating an opportunity for an artist of Pacific heritage helped them meet strategic objectives to support New Zealand’s Pacific artists. (Carter 2009) It also created a cultural exchange opportunity for New Zealand-based artists who wanted some contact with the islands of their heritage. Ian George, who worked with arts organisations in New Zealand and has been the visual arts advisor at the Cook Islands Ministry of Education since 2002, explained that the residency provided a valuable opportunity for artists to “touch base” with a Pacific Island because contemporary Pacific art on a Pacific island is very different from that in New Zealand. (George 2009) Although George’s justification contradicts Tangaroa’s rationale that an artist of Pacific heritage from New Zealand would be able to relate to Cook Islands artists, both reasons highlight anticipated benefits for the local and visiting artists.

89 It is unclear how much commission the museum took. The National Museum’s most recent administrator of the residency, Ngatiuane Maui estimated that they took ten percent. (Maui 2009)
Artistic medium was not specified because the priority was to draw established artists rather than artists working in specific media. (Tangaroa 2009b) Attracting a variety of artistic practices was also crucial for developing a dynamic visual arts community. The focus on established artists had to do with the needs of the local contemporary arts community, paired with the fact that an experienced recipient was more likely to be productive and effective in workshops and presentations and ensure the success of the pilot programme. Artists like George felt that experienced artists were necessary because “there can be problems that… [emerging artists and inexperienced artists] could find themselves in situations that would have been… tough [on] the artist. So… the reason for focusing on established artists was because there are situations that could come up and did come up” that established artists were better prepared to handle. (George 2009)

The Bank of Cook Islands residency had similar criteria because, for the most part, it followed the same model: a three-month residency based at the National Museum. The most significant difference in criteria was that it was intended for local artists. Applicants were expected to have completed arts courses in fifth form or above in the Cook Islands or at overseas institutions, be over 18 years of age, have a clear project outline for the residency, be prepared to make presentations to local students, and produce a body of work to exhibit at the end of the residency. (Koteka 2002b) Applicants were required to be visual artists but medium was not specified. Calls for applicants in 2002 and 2003 did not specify whether applicants were required to be Cook Islanders or residents of the Cook Islands. (Koteka 2002b; Society secretary Mahiriki Tangaroa at work on one of her pieces at a recent exhibition 2003) Artists were not required to conduct workshops but it was encouraged. Tangaroa specified that it was important for students to see the work they were producing. (Carr 2003)

By requiring similar criteria for Cook Islands artists as were expected for the Creative New Zealand residency, the Bank of the Cook Islands residency established the principle that Cook Islands artists should be treated in the same way and valued as much as New Zealand artists. The Bank of the Cook Islands programmes were a direct means of fostering the local visual arts community by sponsoring local artists and engaging those artists as role models by encouraging them to conduct public workshops, which also strengthened local artistic networks. This was important for building confidence, and standards for and within the local arts community. Although Rarotonga’s art market was growing, financial opportunities were still limited. The Bank of the Cook Islands residency provided Cook Islands artists with a salary and resources so that they could
concentrate on producing a substantial body of work, without the anxiety of wondering when works might sell, which allowed artists like Tangaroa and Buchanan to take their artistic practice to another level. (Buchanan 2009)

Criteria for the Beachcomber Contemporary Art residency was less specific because, as a private residency and not reliant on public funding or responsible to the public, it operated at the convenience of the gallery and artists. There were no criteria for heritage or experience, although the artists awarded the residency in 2009, 2010, and scheduled for 2011 were well-known in their field with established careers. Unlike the other residencies, Beachcomber Contemporary Art introduced artists in residence to the public through exhibitions and occasional public programmes. Workshops and other public presentations were not a compulsory component of the residency programme but were arranged at the artists’ discretion.

Artists

Creative New Zealand residency

Veronica Vaevae

New Zealand-born Cook Islander Veronica Vaevae studied Intermedia – Time Based Arts at Elam School of Fine Arts at University of Auckland (1992-1995) and was teaching at Manukau Polytechnic at the time of applying for the residency. (Vaevae 2010) Her experimental artistic practice drew from and responded to her urban Auckland upbringing as well as her Cook Islands heritage. Vaevae’s moving image work layered the old and new – photographs and video/traditional and contemporary culture – to convey self-reflective commentaries on a post-colonial Pacific. For example, Family Line, included in the 1994 exhibition Bottled Ocean, presented generations of Cook Islands family members streamed across a television screen broken by streaks of video snow. By photocopying tapa (barkcloth) and tattoo patterns onto adhesive tape and fixing them on to clear film, Mix that Scratch (1994) (fig. 4.1) visually incorporated symbols of Vaevae’s genealogy and heritage. The video’s audio referred to Len Lye’s scratch technique in Free Radicals by matching an audio track of DJ scratching to her film. (Rainforth 2009, 487) In a review of the work, John Pule described the soundtrack: “Traditional music is discarded to resuscitate a loud noise, this noise dies like a rat but miraculously rises like the moon.” (Pule 1997, 9) His poetic description highlights the effectiveness of the

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90 As a child, Vaevae made brief visits to the Cook Islands with her family.
91 Bottled Ocean, curated by Jim Vivieae in 1994, profiled Pacific artists living in New Zealand, and was influential as it publicly revealed the extensive talent of Pacific artists in New Zealand’s visual art scene.
unexpected combination of Cook Islands tapa patterns with dance music one would find at nightclubs on Karangahape Road in Auckland. In these works, Vaevae’s media and practice made multilayered statements on the post-colonial in the way that she, as a New Zealand-born Cook Islander, combined customary indigenous visual imagery with Western media. Vaevae’s artwork also commented on re-appropriation of indigenous imagery by taking it out of its customary context to blend it with Western media.

She proposed a project that would address issues of popular culture and globalisation: “Video and music… will be a vehicle for myself as a New Media Artist – towards breaking the stereotypes of what one may perceive as ‘art’.” (Vaevae 2001, 1) She planned to work with local artists to produce music videos documenting Cook Islands arts and culture. She remarked, “Cook Islands music and performance arts are a thriving part of its indigenous culture and I hope the videos will be viewed by a wide cross-cultural audience.” (Creative New Zealand 2001) The following analysis reveals that her objectives were not met, but this did not dissuade her from making the most of the residency opportunity.

Vaevae began the inaugural residency in October 2001 and challenges around working in digital media in the Cook Islands arose immediately. She was provided office space at the National Museum but they did not have the technical equipment she needed, so Cook Islands Television (CITV) and Te Ura Studios gave her access to camera and editing equipment. Since the Ministry had not budgeted for the cost of renting equipment, Vaevae was obliged to provide training to the studio’s production staff in return for using the equipment. (Tangaroa 2001, 2-3) Even though Vaevae did this, she still experienced difficulty accessing the studio’s video equipment, which further inhibited her work. (Tangaroa 2001, 3) This did not prevent her from conducting workshops and exhibiting older material including Mix That Scratch (fig. 4.1) in a group show at Beachcomber Contemporary Art and a solo show at the National Museum. By exhibiting video and sound artwork in a gallery setting that the community associated with painting and sculpture, she challenged the audience to re-consider alternative media as contemporary art. Vaevae described one of the works she produced during the residency as a short video work from handmade slides.92 Additionally, works included in a collaborative poetry and art book with Audrey Teuki-Tetupuariki Tuioti Brown, Threads of Tivaevae (2002) (fig 4.2), inspired by her residency experience. (Vaevae 2010)

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92 Neither Vaevae nor the host were able to provide images of the work she produced during the residency for this thesis.
Due to the lack of technical equipment for digital media, Vaevae resorted to other media, such as photography, to express her creativity and included other art forms in the workshops she conducted. For a workshop with primary school students, Vaevae introduced everyday materials and natural resources that could be used for creative and practical projects, such as tie-dying with scrunched newspaper and dye to make sarongs. (Vaevae 2002, 1) She presented examples of her audiovisual work during the workshops and enjoyed observing the spontaneity of students as they watched and interacted with the rhythmic feel of sound pieces. (Vaevae 2002, 1) This is one instance of the benefits of the cycle of artistic exchange: the residency was an opportunity for Vaevae to experience art making in Rarotonga while students were introduced to new media and techniques. Moreover, Vaevae was able to witness a new audience respond to her work.

Vaevae introduced an innovative, unfamiliar, and challenging artistic practice to local artists. Vaevae reported that the residency was a personal challenge, particularly with the lack of technical resources. She also wrote that one of her objectives was to communicate the validity of her art form. (Vaevae 2002) Although she did not have adequate technical resources during the residency, the work she exhibited garnered attention for digital media and she challenged the audience to consider alternative media in visual arts.

Despite numerous challenges as the inaugural artist in residence that were exacerbated by a lack of technical resources, Tangaroa reported that Vaevae was well-received and captured the interest of the local community that had little experience with digital media. (Tangaroa 2001, 1) It was difficult to corroborate the community’s sentiments about Vaevae’s presence, but two of Rarotonga’s art critics wrote positive reviews of the new media work shown at Beachcomber Contemporary Art. Florence Symes-Buchanan praised a showing of Vaevae’s works from 1993 and 1994 in the Araka ki Mua group exhibition: “Vaevae’s contemporary installation moves the senses and one can almost breathe in her visuals.” (Symes-Buchanan 2001) Another local art critic, Charles Pitt also complimented Vaevae’s work, commenting that the introduction of new media would be most appealing to the “younger set” that were part of the digital revolution. (Pitt 2001)

Vaevae’s description of the artist community was equally favourable. In the completion report, she described the local indigenous and expatriate artists were very supportive of her work and “added to the integrity of [her] development as an Artist.” (Vaevae 2002, 1) She offered a recommendation that Creative New Zealand clarify the
roles and expectations of the artist and partner organisations before the start of subsequent residencies to benefit all parties involved. (Vaevae 2002, 2) It was her hope that future artists would have a clearer idea of what would be provided and who would oversee things such as acquiring equipment. To improve inter-agency communication, Vaevae emphasised the need for Creative New Zealand staff to familiarise themselves with Rarotonga’s visual art resources. Tangaroa concurred in a report submitted to Creative New Zealand at the conclusion of Vaevae’s residency:

> On the outset of this project it was mutually agreed that recommendations for this residency were to be forwarded to the Ministry of Culture. This was to avoid problems pertaining to whether or not the artist could be accommodated here at the Ministry. This objective was not met therefore we did not hold full responsibility for the requirements of the elected Artist… The Ministry does not wish to ‘elect’ an artist but to put forth recommendations on an artist we are confident in accommodating. (2001, 3-4)

Overall, the concerns and/or complaints from the residency were minimal which, for an inaugural residency, suggested that it was successful. These issues indicate the learning curves of the residency and provided points for consideration for selection of subsequent artists in residence.

Vaevae’s Cook Island heritage had been central to her artwork prior to the residency, so it is expected that the experience inspired and informed artworks she made afterwards. In earlier work, Vaevae reproduced symbols of her heritage such as *tapa* with imagery of Cook Islanders in New Zealand, whereas works made after the residency featured images of contemporary Rarotonga. In *Threads of Tivaevae*, Vaevae matched photographs from her time in Rarotonga with the words of the poet, Brown. One example is *Cream Doughnut* (2002) (fig. 4.2), in which the doughnut oozing cream serves as both a memento of indulgent sweets as well as the deeper issues of colonial influences, such as foods. Within this image, Vaevae critiqued the colonial legacy by suggesting the negative effects of foreign imports like doughnuts for health problems such as obesity and diabetes. Other images such as *untitled* (2002) (fig. 4.3) depicted her fondness for the serenity of the Rarotongan beaches and environment by the draping of an *ei* (flower garland) across the image. These two works created from photographs taken during the residency differ from earlier works that focus on heritage and Cook Islands identity in New Zealand. Spending time in Rarotonga prompted Vaevae to focus on a different set of social issues. Although she did not produce the music videos that she proposed, Vaevae was able to explore new forms and styles of art works that touched upon
different themes: a personal experience in the Cook Islands complemented earlier reflections from a diasporic Cook Islands community.

Fatu Feu’u 2002

In preparation for the second residency and in response to concerns raised by Tangaroa at the end of Vaevae’s residency, Carter wrote to the Minister of Cultural Development, Sonny Williams,

The selection sub-committee [of the Pacific Arts Committee]… recognised there would be issues with facilities for Veronica [Vaevae] and the art form she works within. I think this was a bold step by the sub-committee, but support them fully on wanting to push boundaries and offer something new and innovative to the Cook Islands. Fatu [Feu’u]’s selection [for the 2002 residency] on the other hand balances out Veronica’s selection and I consider Fatu’s selection as very safe in a good way and ideal as the next recipient… For me the real benefit of a residency is to have a diverse range of artists. Some may not be [as] accessible or popular as others but all are important for introducing their way of thinking and their particular arts practice. To be responsible and for the residency to work for both parties there does need to be understanding on the types of artists which are suitable. I don’t think this narrows the range of artists, it just means being more prepared and informed about what is possible in the Cook Islands and what artists are able to achieve during the residency. (Carter 2002)

Carter’s defence of the Pacific Arts Committee’s choice was unsurprising. His emphasis on pushing boundaries yet finding a safe choice meant that the choice of Fatu Feu’u for the second artist residency was ideal because, over the course of his career, Feu’u pushed boundaries as one of the first Pacific artists in New Zealand to draw from customary motifs and symbols in contemporary painting.

Feu’u emigrated from Sāmoa to New Zealand in 1966 at the age of twenty and immediately found employment in factory work like many others of his generation. His interest in art began in Sāmoa but in New Zealand his ambition to become an artist strengthened, and during his time in the textile industry, he taught himself to paint and sculpt. In 1983, he had his first solo exhibition at the Massey Homestead in Mangere, Manukau. He quickly became friends with notable artists Pat Hanley, Tony Fomison, and Philip Clairmont, who showed particular interest in the Samoan elements of Feu’u’s work. (Mallon and Pereira 1997, 16) In 1988, he embarked on a fulltime career as an artist. Feu’u’s vivid contemporary paintings and sculptures featured symbols and motifs from Oceanic masks and pottery as well as Samoan tattoos and siapo (barkcloth). Feu’u has described his paintings as ‘va’aomanu’ or ‘vessels of knowledge’ and his gallerist Warwick Henderson wrote, “By re-inventing and employing these ancient symbols and
stories he is advancing significant and important lessons from a culture that has learned them long ago.” (Henderson 2010) These qualities are visible in Feu’u’s colourful paintings, prints, ceramics, and sculptures from the early 1990s (figs. 4.4, 4.5, and 4.6). For example, in *Conserve for Tomorrow* (1992) (fig. 4.4) Feu’u shared his concerns to safeguard *fa’a Sāmoa* (the Samoan way of life). The wooden staffs signify those of the meetinghouse where *matai* (a hierarchal system of chiefs based on genealogy) sit to discuss matters at hand. Throughout the early years of his career, Feu’u used the grid format, derived from the structure of *tapa*, in which the individual sections form a narrative. The vibrant paintings between the staffs depict examples of the contemporary visual language Feu’u created based on customary forms and motifs, such as stylised frigate birds derived from *tapa* patterns and masks. Feu’u included these symbols to address vital issues concerning Samoan people and their environment and “an intrinsic culture of respect for conservation and the lifeline of resources.” (Henderson 2010)

He became a spokesperson for contemporary Pacific arts in New Zealand and founded Tautai Contemporary Pacific Arts Trust in the 1980s to support young and aspiring Pacific artists. Feu’u’s public profile is extensive. He has won many awards, including being the first artist of Pacific heritage to win the James Wallace Art Award (1995), the inaugural Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies Artist Residency (1996), and a recipient of the New Zealand Order of Merit for his achievements in art (2001), just to name a few.

When asked about why he applied for the residency in the Cook Islands, Feu’u recalled that Ian George encouraged him to apply. He was not actively looking for a residency at the time but he said that the opportunity was offered to him with the application as a mere formality. (Feu’u 2009) However, a more likely scenario is that with such a strong reputation and history of achievements, Feu’u’s experience surpassed all of Creative New Zealand’s prerequisites and so even if he did not produce an exhaustive application he would have been a top candidate. Moreover, Feu’u was a reliable choice because throughout his career he has continuously advocated the development of Pacific arts by supporting and mentoring aspiring artists, thus meeting the Ministry of Cultural Development’s criteria. Since Feu’u grew up in Sāmoa and had travelled throughout Oceania, it was safe to assume that he would easily identify with the local community in Rarotonga and that those experiences had prepared him to negotiate between the customary and contemporary aspects of Cook Islands culture.
Feu'u began the residency in June 2002. Although he had never been to Rarotonga before, Feu'u had no trouble settling in and was prolific during his time there, producing work for a solo and two group exhibitions and conducting three workshops on different artistic practices: painting, woodblock printing, and carving. He focused on teaching professional skills to local artists and, according to Tangaroa, George, and Michael Tavioni, Feu'u created a sense of camaraderie amongst artists participating in the workshops. (George 2009; Tangaroa 2009b; Tavioni 2009) By teaming up with well-known local artists such as Tavioni, Feu'u showed his respect for local artists who independently developed careers in arts without external support from organisations like Creative New Zealand.

The Cook Islands News' article “‘Godfather’ of Pacific art inspires carver” described the ten-day carving workshop facilitated by Feu'u and held at Tavioni’s property as an opportunity for Cook Islands artists not only to learn from someone with Feu'u’s expertise but also to work together. (Carr 2002a) Feu'u remarked that the lack of materials and tools made the sculpture workshops difficult because there were only two chainsaws, two grinders, two planes, and chisels. (Feu'u 2003, 8) Similar issues arose for Feu'u’s painting and printmaking workshops; he told Tara Carr of The Cook Islands News: “It’s unfortunate especially when there is a willingness to learn. They are all creative but they just don’t have the right tools.” (Carr 2002a) Feu'u’s comment on the lack of equipment, like Vaevae’s lack of technical resources, was also indicative of a larger issue. In New Zealand, artists have a wider variety of tools and resources available to them, whereas places like Rarotonga do not have art schools or the commercial resources that cosmopolitan areas have. Feu’u explained that with the appropriate tools “artists would be encouraged to do more which would benefit themselves, their family and the community” because art can be a lucrative business. (Carr 2002a) Feu’u’s comments to media outlets were critical for garnering more financial support and resources for artists, but in the workshops he encouraged participants to commit to careers in visual arts and used his success as an example of what they could achieve. New Zealand-born Cook Islander Loretta Reynolds who lives in Rarotonga, for example, was encouraged to commit to full-time artistic practice after participating in Feu’u’s workshops, and in 2010 completed a Masters of Fine Arts through Auckland University of Technology’s satellite programme in Rarotonga. (Reynolds 2009)

Feu'u exhibited the series Aroa Rarotonga at Beachcomber Contemporary Art in August and another body of work, Puaikura (named after the village where he stayed
Feu’u said that the light in Rarotonga was the most significant impact on his art practice, (Feu’u 2009) which is evident in the vibrant palette of Agaga Puaikura (fig. 4.7). While Feu’u has consistently used a bright palette to represent the beauty of the Pacific Islands, Agaga Puaikura demonstrates a subtle, yet effective change in his use of colours, retaining high saturation while incorporating a wider range of hues. This adjustment creates a smoother transition across the painting: warmer hues on the right transform into cooler ones on the left. Comparing Agaga Puaikura to Conserve for Tomorrow (fig. 4.4) suggests that while Feu’u continued to use the grid format to create a narrative that went from earth/ocean (land birds and fish) to sky (frigate bird and spirits), the combination of contrasts and shading creates a sense of equilibrium across Agaga Puaikura. Carter remarked: “I thought that was fascinating purely because he’s… an elder of contemporary Pacific art, so you naturally assume… he’d know everything… So again for me, it was kind of like this is the benefit or the value of what the experience could be.” (Carter 2009) Carter’s comment is another indication of the reciprocal exchange that this type of residency can generate. Feu’u’s three workshops benefited the community but the experience was also constructive for his personal artistic development.

Feu’u was also inspired by local artist Varu Samuel, who carved mother-of-pearl shells for the tourist market. Each learned from the other. Feu’u learned to carve the fine shiny surfaces into abstract mask forms that resemble those that were commonly found in his paintings to represent men and the spirit world, as seen in the top row of Agaga
Samuel developed his painting skills and eventually added mother-of-pearl shells to his paintings as Feu’u had. Samuel continues to create art works directed to the tourist market as well as contemporary carvings. Feu’u still uses mother-of-pearl shells in his work, including a public commission for Waitakere City Council entitled *Folau* (2008) and several works included in his 2010 exhibition, *Fa’aola*.

Tangaroa commented that because Feu’u held three workshops and three exhibitions in Rarotonga – one solo and two group shows –

There was a lot of hype, the arts were in the newspaper at least once a week. It was awesome… it just set the benchmark for what a residency should be… [With Feu’u’s] residency it was the encouragement and it was the confidence he [gave] younger artists to pursue, to be committed and dedicated to what they did. He demonstrated that very well with a succession of workshops and exhibitions that he had [did] here… [I]f I were to say there was a successful example of a residency, that was it… a lot of the workshops were collaborative, he involved everyone, he got people to do things. (Tangaroa 2009b)

The enthusiastic response was mutual. Feu’u was impressed with the Cook Islands arts community particularly the development and support of contemporary art that he feels was lacking in other countries such as Sāmoa, which he attributes to the more “traditional” society in Sāmoa that has not developed an appreciation for contemporary art. (Feu’u 2009) This residency in Rarotonga has been a key motivating factor in Feu’u’s plans to initiate a private residency in Sāmoa expected to commence late 2011.

Feu’u was a strategic and reliable choice for the second year of the Cook Islands residency. While Vaevae’s residency established the programme and introduced an innovative and unique contemporary art practice to the Cook Islands, which locals connected with because it was inspired by Cook Islands culture, Feu’u secured the residency’s place in Rarotonga. He also introduced Samoan and pan-Oceanic aesthetics; for example, Tavioni commented that he introduced Rapa Nui *moai* during the sculpture workshop. (Tavioni 2009) Feu’u raised the profile of the residency, imparted contemporary art techniques rooted in customary practices, and introduced skills amongst artists and more appreciation for contemporary art amongst the general public. Feu’u’s very public, almost celebrity, profile while on the island brought much attention to the residency from a wider audience. However, Feu’u was not the only artist in residence in 2002; Eruera Nia was awarded the inaugural three-month Bank of the Cook Islands residency and New Zealand-based Richard Shortland-Cooper conducted a two-

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93 Feu’u has remained in contact with the Cook Islands arts community since 2002. He conducted sculpture workshops in conjunction with a symposium organised by Tangaroa in 2003. (Feu’u 2009)
week workshop also sponsored by the Bank of the Cook Islands. These three artists contributed to the growth of contemporary visual arts in Rarotonga in 2002.

*Sylvia Marsters 2003*

Sylvia Marsters followed Feu'u as the third artist awarded the Creative New Zealand residency. A New Zealand-born Cook Islander, Marsters went to Rarotonga for the first time when she was artist in residence in 2003 and immediately felt at ease there. Marsters did not professionally pursue art until later in life, and explained that, when she did start, her paintings were a means for her to confront and engage with her Cook Island heritage.

I started off painting professionally because I was trying to make a connection with the Cook Islands. My dad [a Cook Islander] passed away and I didn’t really know much about my Cook Islands heritage and I felt really strong that it was important... I felt kind of strange growing up in urban Auckland… my art helped me to strengthen the connection with my Cook Islands side. So, I was always painting anything that had to do with the Cook Islands and I started doing hibiscus… a whole canvas of a hibiscus, not really in a setting in a garden-type thing but just really vibrant colour and the flowers. (Marsters 2010)

When she actually spent time in that environment, her art became more meaningful for her. The experience of three months in Rarotonga allowed Marsters to achieve a greater understanding about her cultural identity. It did not change the stylistic qualities or themes in her art work but gave her more confidence, because she recognised the importance of the environment in Cook Islands life and culture and saw the flora and fauna firsthand. Prior to the residency, Marsters had derived images from “jig-sawing or puzzling together [information] from books or magazines or anything I could find, even travel brochures.” (Marsters 2010)

Although Marsters did not arrive with a public profile like Feu‘u’s, she arrived to find a thriving local arts scene. If 2002 was, as Pitt claimed, the year local art came of age, 94 (Pitt 2002) then 2003 was the year when art came into its own, rooted in a growing variety of initiatives beyond the Creative New Zealand residency. Marsters’ residency was preceded not only by the other artists who had the same award, but also by the Bank of the Cook Islands and Ministry of Cultural Development residency and in-country training programme held by Tim Buchanan and John Pule respectively, which had further increased media attention for arts. Marsters’ residency was eagerly anticipated,

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94 2002 was also the year that Katherine Giuffre was in Rarotonga conducting research on the relationship between social structure and creativity. Presumably, her presence also contributed to the increased focus on local arts in 2002.
although it was expected to be the final year of the Creative New Zealand residency as the original agreement was for three years. At the conclusion of Marsters’ residency, however, the Ministry of Cultural Development and Creative New Zealand renewed the residency for another three years because of the positive results from 2001 to 2003.

Marsters was initially lonely without her family, but she found comfort in the opportunity to focus on her painting: “the residency offered [me] an opportunity to see what it would be like to paint all the time. It was just very exciting and I was grateful for it.” (Marsters 2010) Marsters noted an important aspect of residencies that appeals to artists: uninterrupted time to focus on art. Marsters, like many artists with families and/or other jobs, found it difficult to devote her attention to art, which is one of the reasons that she considered herself an emerging artist. The residency, in turn, reaffirmed her decision to commit to a fulltime career as an artist.

When she arrived, Marsters immediately began painting at both the museum studio and at her apartment. As research for her works, she explored the island, taking in the sights as inspiration for the work produced during the residency and taking photographs that have become visual references for subsequent work produced in Auckland. She found inspiration in the “visual information from the environment” such as the native flora and fauna. (Marsters 2010) Jous de Vive (2003) (fig. 4.11) shows the vibrant and rich floral imagery, which was similar to the imagery she produced prior to the residency, such as Pacific Bloom (2002) (fig. 4.10). In Jous de Vive, the combination of different types of flowers, including the hibiscus that she had been using as a symbolic connection to her island heritage, can also be interpreted as an expression of her comprehension of the dynamism of Cook Islands life and culture. Through the residency, Marsters was able to understand this in a way not communicated through the photographs and books she previously referred to. The array of flowers in Jous de Vive conveyed her feeling of being overwhelmed by the beauty and scents of the flora around her. The compositional arrangement mixed magenta, violet, and rubicund hues with yellow and orange, accentuated with hints of leafy greens suggest the awesome experience. Through the vibrant flowers, she dispersed value-contrasts of nearly equal attraction to move the viewer’s eye quickly and continually over the painting, creating a sense of excitement and anticipation. Comparing Pacific Blooms with Jous de Vive, the outcome of experiencing the Cook Islands environment is evident in the difference of composition, tones, even details of the veins along the petals are more pronounced.
Tangaroa recognised more confidence in Marsters’ paintings during the residency, which was also apparent in the work of other artists in residence: “The benefit [of the residency]… is an enrichment… an identification with the environment or with a particular subject matter… reinforces their work… [and] gives it new characteristics, a new kind of drive” that they continue to build on long after the residency. (Tangaroa 2009b) This reinforcement was evident in works such as Coconut Tree (2008) (fig. 4.12), an unusual departure for Marsters but in keeping with her interest in nature. Coconut Tree set aside her usual palette of red and magenta to concentrate on the intricacies of light falling between the coconut fronds and details of the dried fronds to create a depth and authenticity that was not so developed in Pacific Bloom (fig. 4.10). Her focus on the stems and fronds of the coconut tree emphasised its importance for sustaining life in the Pacific Islands.

Marsters balanced personal artistic development with community outreach. She conducted several workshops, public presentations, and exhibitions during the three-month residency. Like Vaevae, Marsters enjoyed the workshops because she learned from watching the participants work and listening to their ideas:

It’s not just giving from me; I get as much in return. And that’s not why I do it but it’s why I was really interested in the whole residency thing because there is this connection between two communities, people I’ve never met before, and they feed me as much as I feed them. So it’s an exchange of information we share so the more I could do the better for me. (Marsters 2010)

The workshops were another aspect of the residency that allowed Marsters to focus on cultural and artistic exchange and connect with different groups of the community throughout the residency. She summarised the experience:

[the residency] went very well after a few initial hiccups finding it difficult at first, being away from family, being in an unfamiliar environment and having the responsibility of the residency. However at the conclusion… I felt an amazing sense of achievement and any discomfort at the beginning, was far outweighed by the benefits of the residency. (Marsters 2004)

The residency has continued to affect Marsters’ art work. In 2009, she began incorporating tivaevae design elements into her paintings. This was her way of directly referencing cultural elements, specifically the importance of women’s contribution to contemporary Cook Islands culture, through her preferred subject matter: floral imagery. Marsters wanted to celebrate the groups of women that make tivaevae (literally “patches”, a style of appliqué) and present their art as a culturally meaningful product. (Marsters 2010) Marsters explained that composing realistic imagery within the tivaevae format, as
seen in *Tivaevae* (2010) (fig. 4.13), was her way of honouring the Cook Islands technique. She did not depict an actual quilt, rather she continued to demonstrate her accomplished realist technique, incorporating the detailed hibiscus within a symmetrical *tivaevae* format, using rich colour. The concentration and emphasis on the hibiscus foliage, almost decorative in design, demonstrates that she has continued developing her style. This is evidence of the lasting benefits of the residency, which strengthened Marsters’ relationship with her Cook Islands heritage. Marsters, unlike Feu’u or many of the Red Wave Collective artists in Fiji, did not rely on traditional motifs to honour cultural heritage but focused on nature and used flowers as representations of the strength of Cook Islands women.

Marsters has returned to Rarotonga several times since the residency to successfully exhibit at The Art Studio, a gallery in ‘Arorangi, run by Kay and Ian George.

*Filipe Tohi 2004*

The 2004 Creative New Zealand residency was awarded to Filipe Tohi. The Tongan artist is a Tufunga Lalava (master of the art of *lalava*[^96]) as well as a stone and wood sculptor and painter. Tohi’s *lalava* practice was different from previous artists in residence because he used traditional techniques of lashing to make contemporary sculpture. Tohi is an interesting example of an artist who has held residencies at Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies at Canterbury University (2001), the Oceania Centre (2006, 2007), and the Cook Islands. His sculptural work was briefly mentioned in Chapter III, but I use his experience in Rarotonga as an example of how artists introduced different techniques through the residencies. I emphasised the lasting effects of the residency on Marsters’ personal practice, whereas I discuss Tohi’s influence on Cook Islands’ artists to highlight the benefits of the residency on local arts community.

Tohi moved from Tonga to New Zealand in 1978. He worked with Māori carvers at Rangimarie Māori Arts and Crafts Centre, New Plymouth and became a carving tutor there. Tohi had extensive experience conducting workshops from his time at Rangimarie and from numerous residencies and artist workshops. In 1987, Tohi returned to Tonga for a visit and began studying *lalava*, and adapting it to create three-

[^95]: Creative New Zealand did not have a completion report on file for Filipe Tohi. Therefore, I was unable to refer to his immediate impressions; instead I interviewed him several times and referred to several news articles about his residency.

[^96]: *Lalava* is the Tongan word for traditional sennit lashing used for joining and binding materials together such as houses, canoes, and tools before the introduction of Western materials. Lashing technology existed throughout Oceania before the influx of Western materials but the practice has died out in many places.
dimensional contemporary art works that emphasised the cultural meaning contained in particular patterns. His art paid homage to earlier Tufunga Lalava and brought attention to the fine designs and precision of lashing; yet he integrated a contemporary twist through the designs, forms, or layered material, which might be sennit, coloured wool, or two-dimensional paint on canvas. While he used sennit or kafa in its traditional sense when lashing the beams of the Pasifika Fale at the Pacific Studies Department at the University of Auckland (2004) (fig. 4.14), he also lashed individual objects to transform technology of the past into a modern representation of identity and experience, as seen in figure 4.15. For example, he creates models out of wood to illustrate how lalava is a language of construction. Lashing can be used as an aesthetic and functional device in architecture but, for Tohi, transferring it into three-dimensional sculpture is a means of deconstructing lalava to appreciate and contemplate the conceptual dimensions of the art form. (Tohi 2010) He explained that lalava patterns represent a life philosophy. For him, the patterns advocate balance in daily living and are metaphorical and physical ties to cultural knowledge. By deciphering the existing lalava designs, Tohi was unlocking histories recorded by Tufunga Lalava in Tonga and elsewhere throughout Oceania. (Tohi 2009)

At the start of the residency, Tohi indicated his desire to research how and where lashing was used in the Cook Islands. (H. Craig 2004) He explained to the Cook Islands News: “Nowadays there is a lot of modern things so there’s more disconnection of the past. When you talk to the people you start to learn about that connection with the language and the history. That’s what I’m here for – to connect – the string is the connection of everyone.” (H. Craig 2004) This quote communicates Tohi’s conviction that lalava is a relevant and indispensable practice that links, not only people, but histories and cultures throughout the region. Although it is an essentialist approach to believe that Tongan lalava are transferable throughout the region, Tohi’s approach is to learn about the different types of lashing in the region in search of connections.

Tohi proposed lashing and stone and wood carving workshops for the residency. George assisted with organising Tohi’s carving workshop in Rarotonga. They had known one another for many years in New Zealand and collaborated on various sculpture projects, and Tohi acknowledged that it was a great benefit to have a friend with George’s experience to help him. (H. Craig 2004, 9) Tohi also went to the island of Mangaia for research and to hold a workshop on lashing, the first to travel to another
island as part of the residency. Many of the participants of the Mangaia workshop were elders in the community, and Tohi commented on how the older people enjoyed learning lashing because they could remember when it was still used in the Cook Islands. (Tohi 2009) He found examples of lashing in Mangaia (fig. 4.16), studied the patterns, and encouraged workshop participants to revive lashing practices.

Tohi’s residency was unlike the others because he focused on a technique that was in jeopardy of being lost in the Cook Islands and he emphasised both the traditional value and possibilities as a contemporary artistic technique. He also connected to another group of Cook Island artists beyond those in Rarotonga that had access to the previous artists in residence. Those on Mangaia were taught a skill that they could use to restore traditional canoes and for other practical purposes, relying on traditional techniques rather than modern materials and tools. Since he was able to study Cook Islands examples of lashing in Mangaia, he could show workshop participants how to use existing examples to re-create traditional styles and develop new styles and patterns. Tohi also inspired Eruera ‘Ted’ Nia, a New Zealand-born Cook Islander, who studied film in New Zealand but turned to sculpture after moving to Rarotonga in the 1990s. Nia was interested in the way Tohi explained that lashing patterns were used as visual representation of genealogy. (Reeves 2010) After Tohi’s residency, Nia began studying examples of Cook Islands lashing on ceremonial implements and sacred objects, mostly in museums, in order to revive the art form in the Cook Islands. (Nia 2010, 79) Lashing became a central focus in Nia’s Masters of Art and Design project Are Korero (2010) for Auckland University of Technology.

Tohi has returned to the Cook Islands on multiple occasions since his residency. In 2008, he was commissioned to design a sculptural entranceway for the USP Cook Islands campus, and developed a modernist metal sculpture based on the principles of lalava (fig. 4.17). As with the sculptures he designed at the Oceania Centre in 2007, a local engineer constructed the work.

Bank of the Cook Islands residency

In the same year that Feu’u told the Cook Islands News that it was unfortunate that workshop participants did not have the right equipment, “especially when there is a willingness to learn,” (Carr 2002a) local patronage of contemporary visual arts commenced with the Bank of the Cook Islands residency, hosted at the National

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97 Johnny Peninsula also travelled to an outer island to conduct a workshop during his residency in 2005.
Museum. While the artistic and cultural exchange spurred by the Creative New Zealand residency was important and beneficial, Tangaroa noted that it was also important to create opportunities for local artists. She told the *Cook Islands News*: “Too many artists are leaving for other countries.”(Koteka 2002b) As a result of Tangaroa’s appeal for funding, the Bank of the Cook Islands provided financial sponsorship for a local artist to have a three-month residency at the National Museum. The residency was only awarded for two years; the first was to Eruera Nia in 2002 and then Buchanan in 2003. I focus on Buchanan’s experience, however, it is useful to note that reviews of Nia’s residency indicated that it was successful and the sculptures he produced during the three months sold and led to several commissions. (Browne 2003; Carr 2002b, 2003) At the conclusion of the residency, Nia told Bank of the Cook Islands representatives that “by funding him as an artist it gave back his personal confidence” and encouraged them to continue the programme so that other artists could have a similar experience. (Carr 2002b) In 2003, he opened Inanui Gallery to exhibit his work as well as other Cook Islands artists, “turning a long held dream of establishing his own gallery into reality.” (Browne 2003) Also in 2003, he exhibited a sculptural triptych at Canterbury University where he earned a Masters in cinematography. (Browne 2003; Carr 2002b) The timing of these achievements suggests that the residency was part of a successful period in Nia’s professional career.

*Tim Manarova Buchanan 2003*

The residency provided an opportunity for Buchanan to develop his artistic practice. Although he gave presentations to students, artistic and cultural exchange was not as much of a focus for his residency, presumably because he was a local artist.

Tim Manarova Buchanan moved to Rarotonga from New Zealand in the early 1990s. He considers himself self-taught although he studied art in secondary school in New Zealand. His early works combined Western modernist and post-Impressionist styles with Cook Islands motifs and icons in scenes of daily Cook Islands life, such as *Three women making ei’s* (1998) and *Two women on the beach* (1999) in which the stylised motifs were patterned onto *pareu*. (Bergman 2009b) Tangaroa described his important contribution to Cook Islands art:

[Buchanan is] one of the few who has succeeded in developing a distinctive Cook Islands style. His work emphasises human relationships in the islands. It illustrates the common customary practice of unity and communal gathering. The success of his work is in the visual record he makes by documenting the behaviour of people at a time and place. Another distinctive mark of his work is
the striking use of colour, reminiscent of the vibrant combinations of the *tiavae*. The colours confirm a style that is unique to the Cook Islands. (Tangaroa 2003)

In focussing on the qualities that made Buchanan’s paintings representative of Cook Islands contemporary art, Tangaroa did not elaborate on his references to modern European artists such as Gauguin and Matisse, which are evident in his work. Buchanan’s subject matter has characteristically represented contemporary Cook Islands life and also referencing the colonial history.

*Untitled* (1998) (fig. 4.18) demonstrates Buchanan’s focus on communal gatherings, specifically a group of women seemingly engaged in light-hearted conversation on a public bench. Rarotonga’s landscape also plays a prominent role in the work as the picturesque skyline of dormant volcanoes adds depth while groups of towering coconut trees contrast the vertical contours and also create a sense of intimacy as the island’s landscape arcs around the women. Buchanan pays particular attention to the decorative aspects of the women’s dress and accents such as flowers behind ears and hats that make the scene quintessentially ‘Cook Islands’. The colours are, as Tangaroa noted, striking, but not a particularly harmonious palette.

Buchanan reserved overt social and political commentary for cartoons produced for the *Cook Islands News* under the pseudonym Kata (Cook Islands Maori for laughter). Editor Moana Moeka’a praised Buchanan’s ability to convey the gist of a story and make commentary, especially political, sprinkled with ‘island’ humour to provide light-hearted relief, as seen in figure 4.19. (Moeka’a in Buchanan 2004, 2)

Buchanan said that the stipend, space, and materials, along with the freedom to experiment, allowed him to take his artistic practice to another level. (Buchanan 2009) Buchanan observed that the residency made “the general public aware of what artists do and how we contribute to the artistic landscape and our own development as a people.” (Buchanan 2009) Buchanan used the residency to explore what he called “more risky themes” that he would have been hesitant to try if he were depending on the paintings for income, (Buchanan 2009) becoming aware of what his work could do politically. He took advantage of the opportunity to create a series of provocative historical paintings that dealt with the impact of European contact in the Pacific in the nineteenth century, “using forms… indigenous to the Cook Islands.” (Buchanan 2009) The body of work titled *Ei Ata Kura Manga No to Mata*, focused on significant turning points in the social and political development of the Cook Islands, as seen in *Triumph of a New God* (fig. 4.20).

98 Presumably, Buchanan was referring to what local artists contribute in addition to or, possibly, as opposed to the New Zealand-based artists that were awarded residencies.
Buchanan employed a grid format to create a narrative within the painting, the format of some tapa. In the six panels within this work, Buchanan depicted a chronological narrative beginning with the arrival of voyaging ships to the islands, the arrival of missionaries with Bible and cross in hand, Cook Islanders shedding customary dress for Mother Hubbard dresses, and the construction of churches. The lower half of the historic timeline depicts figures writhing on the ground, which may symbolise suffering from diseases introduced by Europeans to which Cook Islanders had no immunity. There are also half-buried statues symbolic of the deities, rejected by Christians, which Buchanan inserted as a reminder of ancestors looking on at the loss of customary Cook Islands culture. Buchanan described the underlying theme in the exhibition text: “The friction is alive when foreign encounters challenge the lifestyle and existence of the people and in turn the people silently question the quality of their own lives.”(Harwood 2003) He expressed those frictions through the grid format which allowed him to isolate silhouetted forms, which focused attention on the events associated with the imagery rather than details of landscapes or colours as he did in Untitled (fig. 4.19). He strategically worked with a limited range of colours, selecting hues of red, with a relatively high saturation framing the buff background, and black to accentuate the encounters. The reductive approach to colour assisted Buchanan in conveying his message about how encounters between indigenous and European culture have resulted in the loss of traditional Cook Islands culture. Below the six windows to the past lies a carved tangaroa staff. The staff appears to be Buchanan’s effort at optimism, by ‘burying’ this at the bottom of the painting, he indicates that Cook Islands culture will resurface.

*From Coconut Trees to Factories* (2003) (fig. 4.21), also produced during the residency, charted another upheaval to life in the Cook Islands: the mass migration to New Zealand where Cook Islanders were often employed in factories. Again, his work referenced European painters, in this case Matisse, paying tribute to Matisse’s cut-outs as well as the appliqué technique used for tivaevae, which allowed him to transcend the boundaries of conventional painting. Buchanan attributed the ability to produce such a distinct and confrontational body of work to the “separate time and space” that the residency provided. (Buchanan 2009) Buchanan’s *Ei Ata Kura Manga No to Mata* exhibition at the Cook Islands National Museum in mid-September 2003 revealed the benefits of the residency, which allowed him to focus on a number of subjects that were not necessarily directed to the local art market, while also continuing with the familiar landscapes and portraits he was known for, such as scenes of Rarotonga’s beautiful and
peaceful lifestyle (fig. 4.18). The exhibition included scenes of Rarotonga’s lagoon and inland mountains as well as portraits to divide it up “in the style of a meal with an entrée, main course, and dessert.” (Harwood 2003) Although Buchanan was eager to shake things up with provocative imagery, he still provided a “dessert” of soothing landscapes that charted the progress of the day from dawn to dusk. (Harwood 2003) He critiqued Western influences, but also reminded the audience of the Cook Islands’ strengths in the splendour of the land and ocean.

Buchanan’s residency paralleled others in Papua New Guinea during the political transition to independence, and Fong’s responses to Fiji’s coup d’état, showing that residencies could be a vehicle for artists to raise social and political concerns.

**Beachcomber Contemporary Art residency**

Ben Bergman offered Mahiriki Tangaroa Beachcomber Contemporary Art’s inaugural residency in 2002. It was informal compared to the other programmes offered in Rarotonga in 2002; primarily because Bergman extended the offer to Tangaroa without any application process, in what seems to be an informal arrangement that resulted in a successful residency. The opportunity seemed to be unique until many years later when Bergman made another invitation to an artist represented by the gallery.

**Andy Leleisi’uao 2009**

In 2007, Bergman invited Andy Leleisi’uao for a residency at Beachcomber Contemporary Art. He first came across Leleisi’uao’s art while attending a presentation given by Ron Brownson, Senior Art Curator and Pacific Curator at Auckland Art Gallery, at the Pacific Arts Association Conference in Christchurch in 2003. Bergman described what attracted him to the work: “I like the fact that he took a risk… Some of his earlier works were… quite emotionally eruptive.” (Bergman 2009a) Bergman’s invitation was based on Leleisi’uao’s skill rather than heritage like the Creative New Zealand residency. Beachcomber Contemporary Art provided him with travel expenses, accommodation (a self-contained apartment and studio), a living stipend, and art supplies he ordered and collected in Auckland. Leleisi’uao was required to produce a body of work to be exhibited at Beachcomber Contemporary Art at the conclusion of the six-week residency. Leleisi’uao had visited Rarotonga and exhibited with Tangaroa in *Scriptures from the West* at Beachcomber Contemporary Art in 2007, and so, when he accepted the residency in 2009, he was already familiar with the local art scene.
Leleisi'uao is a New Zealand-born Samoan whose early work in the 1990s addressed social and political issues faced by himself and his peers in what he refers to as a naïve style. For example, *Honest to God* (1998) (fig. 4.22) was painted during his first residency at Casula Powerhouse, Sydney. In the painting, Leleisi'uao depicts hypocrisy within the church as violence ensues, even by the ministers, and a boy has his hand raised to speak up but is quieted by his mother. Leleisi'uao's message is blatant but it is not a message against Christianity as, in the upper left, Jesus weeps for the conditions of this church. By 2009, Leleisi'uao was developing a different narrative style “that unravelled a world occupied with creatures tainted with moral and social ambiguity.” (Leleisi'uao 2009b) The moral and social ambiguity referred to his departure from the socio-political issues that affected Samoans in New Zealand. Instead he invented creatures and built their world by depicting interactions and daily activities such as making offerings of effervescent hearts, conversing, or travelling terrains of Janus heads as seen in *Aretures of the Actaur People I* (2009) (fig. 4.23). However, over time, the fantasy world he created has also dealt with social and cultural issues that affect all people, not just Samoans.

For Leleisi'uao, the Beachcomber Contemporary Art residency was an important opportunity to look within himself and face new challenges. He said,

> It’s important… [to put yourself] out there to be criticised or challenged or to be applauded… you put yourself [in the] open to be scrutinised by the people who don’t know… about art, or people who know a lot about art, so either way you’re in a space… you’re not used to. (Leleisi'uao 2009b)

He did not hold any workshops or presentations but he did spend time with local artists such as Tangaroa, Buchanan, and Kay George in a kind of individual artistic exchange that gave him the opportunity to learn more about the local art scene and the local artists to understand the context of his new work. (Leleisi'uao 2009a)

Like Buchanan’s residency, Leleisi'uao’s was really about personal artistic development. He used the opportunity to produce a “disciplined series… creating new iconographies.” (Leleisi'uao 2009b) He felt that he was able to achieve that goal and explained that the forty paintings he produced were “new weapons or artillery… which I can use and set myself [up with] for the next year or so.” (Leleisi'uao 2009b) During the residency, Leleisi'uao’s paintings evolved from narratives composed around central Janus heads, that he first developed the year before in *Angipanis of the Abanimal People* (2008) and exhibited at Whitespace Contemporary Art in Auckland, to linear narratives with two primary creatures commandeering the lower half of the painting, as seen in *Veil of Sulama III* (2009) (fig. 4.24). (Leleisi'uao 2009a, 73) He also developed other narratives within the
same theme, such as funerary scenes where the creatures wear pe'a (Samoan male tattoo), and a diptych that featured an amphibious creature on the verge of extinction that was surrounded by disinterested ebony figures. (Leleisiʻuao 2009a, 73) It was the line works, such as *Veil of Sulama III*, that Leleisiʻuao went on to develop in 2010 during subsequent residencies at Taipei Artist Village, Taiwan and the Colin McCahon residency in Titirangi, Auckland.

Unlike the majority of other artists in residence included in this case study, Leleisiʻuao did not sell any work at the residency exhibition. Another unusual aspect was that the exhibition was not reviewed in the *Cook Islands News* but Bergman wrote a description in a newspaper advertisement for the show. However, the gallery did receive international attention for the renewed residency programme. Bergman arranged for *Art News* to feature an article about Leleisiʻuao’s residency. (Leleisiʻuao 2009a)

Leleisiʻuao noted that Bergman was more involved with him than previous residency hosts or sponsors. “He really enjoys having artists around and I really enjoyed his involvement in seeing the works develop, I found it refreshing because in other residencies the directors tend to keep their distance and really only popped up when the residency is finished or when something turns to shit.” (Leleisiʻuao 2010) This highlights a difference between private and public residencies: Bergman’s selection of the first two artists in residence seems to have been driven by his personal relationship with the artists as much as his interest in their work. At the time of inviting Tangaroa and, years later, Leleisiʻuao, Bergman had a close friendship with the respective artist. The fact that Leleisiʻuao created forty new works during his stay indicated that the relationship was mutually productive and reflects how comfortable and secure he was working in Rarotonga. Since Leleisiʻuao’s residency, the relationship remains strong between artist and director and Beachcomber Contemporary Art was instrumental in Leleisiʻuao securing a solo exhibition at Kips Gallery in Chelsea, New York (2009), as well as his inclusion in *Manuia* (2010), an exhibition sponsored by Beachcomber Contemporary Art at the Native American Community House in New York. Bergman also selected Leleisiʻuao as the feature artist in the gallery’s booth at Volta New York art fair in 2011. This is evidence of the long-term benefits for the gallery; while none of Leleisiʻuao’s residency paintings sold, more than half of the works at Volta sold. The gallery has

99 However, Leleisiʻuao was not overly concerned with selling work (Leleisiʻuao 2009b) although the gallery had a different position as it did not have the benefit of sales. As of 2011, the gallery held the paintings as stock but the artist expects to retrieve them in the near future.
invested in Leleisi'uao’s artistic development which has benefited both the artist and gallery beyond the immediate circumstances of the residency.

**Social and economic development**

The administrators, Tangaroa, Maui, Carter, and Bergman, and the artists emphasised the benefits of the residencies for the artists’ own practice and/or for the local community. Over the ten years that the three residency programmes took place, it is evident that new careers emerged or were strengthened and that the appreciation of contemporary art increased as a result of residencies.

Katherine Giuffre argues that creativity is a social phenomenon produced by particular types of social structures. “Moreover, particular positions and roles within those structures are necessary for creativity to flourish. Creative individuals are embedded within specific network contexts so that creativity itself, rather than being an individual personality characteristic is, instead, a collective phenomenon.” (Giuffre 2009) Giuffre conducted research in Rarotonga in 2002, the year when all three residencies took place, so it is useful to consider her assessment in regards to the social and economic implications of residencies. In a relatively small community like that on the island of Rarotonga, the influx of artists had a considerable impact on the arts community. But it was also dependent on the related networks that enabled creativity to flourish – the collective influences that Giuffre suggested. For example, political networks that Tangaroa\(^{100}\) or those at the Ministry of Cultural Development could access or the artistic networks in New Zealand that visiting artists could access helped extend support and opportunities to those participating in the residencies and their associated workshops. The collective capacity of such networks supported artists because endorsement from local elite, like politicians, or overseas arts professionals, such as gallery owners, helped embed a local appreciation for the artistic exchange furthered by the residencies as well as the economic opportunities such as sales. Carter indicated that, for Creative New Zealand, the residency was a strategic way to create and strengthen relationships. (Carter 2009) In addition, these residencies have strengthened relationships amongst the local art community, between artists and gallerists, and international artists and partners.

The programme co-sponsored and facilitated by Creative New Zealand demonstrates how an organisation used residencies as a tool for development and

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100 Mahiriki Tangaroa’s family is well-known and respected in the Cook Islands for various roles in politics.
building arts infrastructure in Oceania. As Carter says, Creative New Zealand’s residencies for Pacific artists, those in the Cook Islands and the subsequent programme in Sāmoa (2007-present), are about creating “something not as a means in itself or the end result” but something that has mutual benefits for the artist in residence and the host community. (Carter 2009) He noted that the Pacific Arts Committee’s residencies required artists to run workshops with local students and artists to pass arts knowledge on to the local community, whereas the Arts Board’s residencies, in Berlin and New York, were open to any New Zealand visual artists and did not require artists to conduct workshops. (Carter 2010) The idea that New Zealand artists have the skills to train artists in the Cook Islands relates to Creative New Zealand’s role as an arts development agency in the Pacific; Carter remarked: “everything we do should have a developmental aspect or outcome. The Pacific Arts Committee has chosen to use residency opportunities in this way as it can achieve a range of positive outcomes for the level of involvement.” (Carter 2010) By using residencies as a ‘development tool’, Creative New Zealand invested in the development of arts infrastructure in Oceania, which could ultimately improve a country’s economic and social conditions.

Carter’s reference to Creative New Zealand’s perception of ‘helping’ in an altruistic manner emphasised the significant difference between the Pacific residencies and Creative New Zealand’s residencies in Berlin and New York, or even Beachcomber Contemporary Art’s residency that focused entirely on individual artists’ practice. By employing such a model for the residencies, Creative New Zealand was respecting and responding to local cultural landscapes where reciprocity and communality were common cultural values.

Residencies were part of recurring programmes aligned with Creative New Zealand’s strategic objective of strong Pacific arts and fostered relationships with other Pacific nations. (Carter 2008a, 2009, 2010) In the Cook Islands, this allowed the Ministry of Cultural Development to co-sponsor residencies that it may not have had the funds, expertise, or resources to initiate independently. It enabled the department to meet its objectives to promote aspects of Cook Islands culture that contribute to national pride.
and identity, (Marurai 2002) because the art produced would reflect Cook Islands culture. More importantly though, the residencies were envisioned as a means of keeping artists in the country because, as Tangaroa commented in 2002, “Too many artists are leaving for other countries.” (Koteka 2002b) Her assumption seems to have been that if the government invested in more opportunities for the arts community, artists would also invest by remaining in the Cook Islands.

Bergman concurred that the residencies were indeed a practical means of developing the arts industry in Rarotonga. He credited Creative New Zealand’s residency with setting off a successful series of residency schemes, including Beachcomber Contemporary Art’s residencies:

[The Creative New Zealand residency] provided the artist with the opportunity, that benefit was directly transferred here [in Rarotonga], our artists were directly exposed to it, they grew and learned as a result of the residency, and also the public were exposed to [the arts]. (Bergman 2009a)

Additionally, my research shows that the residencies raised the profile of local artists and that contemporary arts have garnered substantial attention from Cook Islanders at home and abroad, as well as expatriates and tourists. The *Cook Islands News* regularly reported on art exhibitions and Cook Islands artists were reviewed in international publications including New Zealand newspapers, *Art News New Zealand*, and *Artlink* (Australia). While this attention was due to a wider network of active artists, residencies did contribute the media attention. These outcomes were possible because of the efforts of local artists like Michael Tavioni, Ian and Kay George, and Eruera Nia who advocated for and invested in local arts infrastructure and helped establish a market for contemporary visual arts in the early 1990s. Concurrently with the residencies, Ian and Kay George established The Art Studio (2002) and Nia opened Inanui Gallery (2003) in Avatiu, both on Rarotonga. These examples draw attention to the extent of patronage invested in visual arts over a relatively short period in a relatively small area.

This was, in part, due to the public profile of artists promoted by the residencies, for example, that of Fatu Feu'u. Bergman remarked that Feu'u attained a public profile from newspaper and television interviews as well as spending time at popular restaurants on the small island, which gave exposure to the residency. (Bergman 2009a) Charles Pitt noted that Feu'u’s residency was the highlight of the year but visits from other prestigious artists and additional initiatives also contributed to the year in which “local art came to age.” (Pitt 2002) The significant expansion of initiatives for local artists was the triumph. In addition to frequent exhibitions in Rarotonga, other initiatives were
announced in 2002 such as the Bank of Cook Islands residency for Cook Islands artists and in-country training programme, as well as the founding of the Cook Islands National Visual Arts Society. Pitt highlighted the formation of the Arts Society: “It has come at the right time… [L]ook for senior artists to provide inspiration and direction for local artists in the years ahead.” (Pitt 2002) The prominence of contemporary visual arts was not simply coincidence but influenced by the relocation of artists – Buchanan, Tangaroa, Nia, and Ian and Kay George – who “ensured the maintenance of high standards in terms of originality, artistic merit and quality.” (Pitt 2002) Local artists learned from, supported, and collaborated with visiting artists like Feu'u who raised the profile, expectations, and confidence of Rarotonga’s art scene and appreciation of it by the wider community.

Although there has been a steady increase in the number of local artists, there is still a lack of consistent training. According to Buchanan and Tavioni, the workshops have led to artists learning certain techniques or styles to cater to the tourist industry, (Buchanan 2009; Tavioni 2009) such as Vaevae’s workshop on tie-dying pareu or Feu’u’s woodblock-printing workshop that focused on incorporating traditional motifs. The well-known academic and author Ron Crocombe recognised the potential of the tourism industry for artists and called for the Cook Islands “to evolve its own strategies… [to] encourage careers in arts and crafts that will provide good incomes while enhancing cultural images, tourism, video and audio opportunities.” (Crocombe and Crocombe 2003, 330) In the Cook Islands, where tourism is the largest source of national income, it was inevitable that visual artists found opportunities in the tourist market. In the context of development, the tourist market was a source of opportunity and income, and it is unsurprising that it affected many local artists’ work. For instance, several of Buchanan’s paintings depicted scenes of local women in beautiful and vibrant landscapes. The paintings *Untitled* (1998) (fig. 4.18) and *Waiting for the Bus* (2006) (fig. 4.25) imply that, although Buchanan focused on more risky and provocative themes during his 2003 residency, he had more opportunity to sell idyllic depictions of Rarotongan life than political commentary. Nonetheless, he integrated subtle social commentary since the residency. *Waiting for the Bus* touched upon the enduring modesty of dress first introduced by Christian missionaries versus recent influxes of Western trends introduced by the far-reaching effects of globalisation. Buchanan provides a good example of how residencies were an opportunity for artists to break out of the confines of producing for the tourist market.
Artists in Rarotonga have proven that visual arts are a financially viable career. Local residencies such as the Bank of the Cook Islands residency and Beachcomber Contemporary Art residency have invested in Cook Islands artists such as Nia, Buchanan, and Tangaroa, providing them with the support and resources to develop bodies of work that ultimately contributed to career advancement and economic stability. Visiting artists such as Feu'u also contributed to the economic development of arts in Rarotonga because, by receiving some of the highest prices paid for art at that time, Feu'u raised the levels of investment and the expectations and/or aspirations of Cook Islands-based artists. There has been a steady increase in the arts support structure since 2002 due to public and private investment in the arts, such as residencies and international art exhibitions. Recognising the potential for careers in the arts, USP's Cook Islands campus has been working towards establishing professional training for Pacific artists at the proposed Pacific Studies Campus. (Dixon 2007) This is indicative of not only the need for consistent training opportunities but also for the long-standing appreciation of professional accreditation in Rarotonga.

On the private side of Rarotonga’s arts industry, Beachcomber Contemporary Art demonstrates business investment that benefited both private business and artists. Beachcomber Contemporary Art received patronage from other local businesses to supplement costs for local and international exhibitions. Air New Zealand, Pacific Resort Hotels, CITC Liquor, and Cook Islands Print Services have supported Beachcomber Contemporary Art’s exhibitions in Rarotonga, Auckland Christchurch, Dunedin, and New York in various ways. In 2010, with their assistance, Beachcomber Contemporary Art exhibited *Manuia* at the American Indian Community House in New York, featuring four Cook Islands artists and two New Zealand-based artists of Pacific heritage. *Manuia* was officially opened by Helen Clark, former Prime Minister of New Zealand, and more than seventy-five percent of the works sold. (Bergman 2010) This is a further example of the level of development achieved by Cook Islands artists and art galleries through a combination of public and private initiatives.

*Cultural exchange*

When asked why the Ministry of Cultural Development’s residency was directed to artists of Pacific heritage in New Zealand, Tangaroa explained that she felt Pacific heritage was critical for the residencies so that local artists could connect with artists of similar heritage. (Tangaroa 2009b) Equally important was the need to ensure that the
residency would align with the goals of Creative New Zealand’s Pacific Arts Committee to support New Zealand’s Pacific artists. For artists like Marsters, a shared heritage helped her connect with the community and “break down a few barriers.” (Marsters 2010) Conversely, Vaevae felt that culture as a criterion was not necessarily positive and that the cultural prerequisite was not necessary for the residency to be successful: “I personally think it [the cultural requirement] restricts artists of other backgrounds to share and experience the [Cook Islands] culture and vice versa especially for the people of [the Cook Islands], it limits their exposure to an international experience of another culture and art.” (Vaevae 2010) Local artist, Michael Tavioni agreed, explaining that he would rather have someone with experience that could effectively teach; he suggested that the purpose of the residencies was assisting aspiring artists, so for him skill was more relevant than heritage. (Tavioni 2009) “It’s not a holiday for a person with Cook Islands blood.” (Tavioni 2009) In Tavioni’s opinion, Marsters was an ideal recipient of the residency, because, although the cultural experience and exchange was important to her, she skilfully and enthusiastically conducted workshops for local artists.

Even if Vaevae did not feel that heritage should have been a criterion, it was the opportunity for cross-cultural exchange prompted her application to Creative New Zealand. (Vaevae 2002) Bergman remarked that Vaevae’s Cook Islands heritage was beneficial to her audience:

She had some very challenging photography as well… people here didn’t necessarily understand it, but it was indulged. And, this is actually an interesting angle, it was seen [and indulged] because of her being a Cook Islander. So, the audience tried as best they could to understand what she was trying to say… [because] she was a person of Cook Islands descent. (Bergman 2009a)

The work described by Bergman included the first digital media exhibited in Rarotonga. As Bergman indicated, Vaevae’s Cook Islands heritage prompted the positive reception, or indulgence, of the innovative and unusual media. Florence Symes-Buchanan responded to Vaevae’s exhibition, Akara ki Mua, in The Cook Islands News: “While our culture is rich in content and offers limitless inspiration and interpretation, it is significant that this new collection of art not only retains its historical link, but takes a step further and boldly explores its own future.” (Symes-Buchanan 2001) The identifiable references to customary culture led audiences to contemplate the ways that customs can be conveyed through new media.

While Vaevae and Tavioni felt that Pacific heritage was not a necessary criterion for the residency, within these three residency schemes there have not been any artists
that are not of Pacific heritage, aside from Rick Welland whose thirty years living in Rarotonga meant he had extensive knowledge of Cook Islands culture. For Sylvia Marsters, cultural criteria were a meaningful and beneficial component that motivated her to apply for the residency. Marsters explained that being raised in New Zealand she felt disconnected from her “homeland” and sought a deeper connection to and confirmation of her cultural heritage:

It was just like I had come home and there were all these aunties and uncles. I felt like my personality fitted right in. And a lot of the things I thought about myself were confirmed. And the greatest thing for me was painting flowers; most strongly the women felt a connection through me, because they’d say, ‘Yes, that’s us. That’s our bright colourful flowers.’ (Marsters 2010)

She initiated discussions around how imagery of flora and fauna may also reference culture, and how these symbols of femininity relate to “the strong matriarchal society of Polynesia.” (oka‘ioceanikart 2009) She explained, “to Cook Islanders, flowers represent all that is beautiful and bountiful in the natural environment. Flowers worn in the hair of women and behind the ear are an evocative emblem of femininity and the flourishing [P]acific.” (Pitt 2003) She made efforts to connect with the local community, not just artists, and opened up dialogues around contemporary art with new audiences. For Marsters, the local identification and appreciation of her paintings was the endorsement she valued most because it was important for her to be recognised as a Cook Islands artist by Cook Islanders. (Marsters 2010)

Marsters was also appreciated by local artists, such as Tavioni, for the artistic and cultural exchange that her presence stimulated; her presence reminded him that “our sea and our people are full of colour.” (Tavioni 2009) After hearing Tavioni’s comment, Marsters responded:

I think it opened up a different style of painting. Pacific art was sort of seen early on as patterns, a lot of people had been painting just patterns. Seeing the flowers and a different style of communicating through art… Pacific Island doesn’t just have to be patterns and that, even though tattoo and things like that are a huge part of our history, I think [my process is] using a European process to filter Pacific Island [experiences] and using it for our purposes. (Marsters 2010)

Marsters was able to communicate that art did not have to imitate customary designs to be culturally relevant and meaningful. This was similar to the way Vaevae employed different media to show customary imagery. Marsters has maintained those connections with return visits to Rarotonga to see family, friends, and exhibit her artwork at The Art Studio. She commented that those return visits were an important means of supporting
Pacific arts to “keep up those ties with everybody else to make sure that [the arts are] staying strong and that we continue to evolve.” (Marsters 2010)

Residencies initiated a lasting relationship between New Zealand-based artists and Cook Islands artists and created opportunities to meet Creative New Zealand’s goal for New Zealand-based Pacific artists “to interact and share his/her skills with the Cook Islands arts community.” (Carter 2008a, 1) Another example is Filipe Tohi’s influence on Eruera Nia. Although Tohi practiced Tongan lashing styles, Nia found the practice culturally relevant. He wrote: “[Tohi]’s concepts are unashamedly Polynesian, no mutations, but an innovation created out of the old that is fresh and new and culturally relevant to all Polynesians that have lashing as part of their histories.” (Nia 2010, 82) Although Tohi is mostly inspired by Tongan and not Cook Islands designs, his concepts are modern innovations of the customary techniques and styles. Tohi introduced Nia to the idea that lashing patterns were not simply decoration, and Nia wrote: “I believe that Raranga [weaving] using ka’a [lashing] patterns was a carrier of genealogical information. It was not purely decorative, especially the forms used on rafter beams and sacred objects. Though the history of particular examples extant has been lost, the complex pattern structures remain as do the genealogies; these elements may form and compose such illustrations.” (Nia 2010, 100) Nia studied examples of Cook Islands lashing in Rarotonga and Mangaia and concluded “the design is progressed and lays out visually, a genealogical table. The resultant design is a simple illustration of the complexity of a Polynesian genealogy with a particular beauty that commends our ancestors, the originators of this art form.” (Nia 2010, 102) Based on the information from Tohi and his own research, Nia reconstructed the Inaere pattern (2009) (fig. 4.26). This was a direct result of Tohi’s introduction of lalava during his 2004 residency and subsequent collaboration between the two artists in 2008 and 2009. Nia also emulated Tohi’s method of reproducing lashing patterns in three-dimensional sculpture to produce a series of works that included, Taria Tupuna Marquettes (Liquid Stone) (2009) (fig. 4.27). He created the wooden marquettes as a model to experiment with casting the forms in concrete (liquid stone). (Nia 2010, 95) The patterns on the lower sections of the forms were derived from lashing patterns similar to the style that Tohi has used in stone, wood, and aluminium sculptures such as Mataatangaloa Eyes of the Gods (2002) (fig. 4.28). As a local artist, Nia thus engaged in cultural exchange through the residencies, applying knowledge from a Tongan artist to renew a traditional Cook Islands technique through contemporary art forms.
Like Vaevae and Marsters, Buchanan and Tangaroa also focused on cultural themes and reflected on issues related to contemporary Cook Islands identity. Giuffre observed: “the twentieth century has seen the intentional development of a national Cook Islands identity constructed around some shared attributes of traditional Maori culture and referred to as ‘Cook Islands Maori.’ This constructed identity attempts to build nationhood within the Cooks and to culturally distinguish the Cooks from other Polynesian societies.” (Giuffre 2009, 16) She suggested that the international experiences of Cook Islands visual artists were formative “especially as some of the artists began to develop a political consciousness related to their ethnicity.” (Giuffre 2009, 41) Therefore, relationships with Cook Islands Maori culture gained a dominant position in the social hierarchy, which became evident in the arts community. Since it was Cook Islands Maori artists like Tangaroa and George driving the Ministry of Cultural Development’s residencies, the emphasis on cultural exchange was logical. Moreover, Buchanan’s experience demonstrates that the residency prompted him to produce challenging paintings addressing social and political issues, which provoked audiences to contemplate the dynamics of contemporary Cook Islands culture.

It was not until Beachcomber Contemporary Art’s later residencies that the focus changed to international artists, although the claim of international status seems to be rhetorical because, as of 2011, there have not been any artists from outside the region. Since there was no requirement for workshops or presentations, Beachcomber Contemporary Art’s residency left cultural exchange to artists’ discretion. Leleisi’uao worked privately in his apartment studio because “for the first time in a long while, I wanted to be selfish with my time and art.” (Leleisi’uao 2009a, 74) Although he did not necessarily seek cultural exchange during the residency, he mentioned that the cultural environment encouraged his creative process. (Leleisi’uao 2009b) He remarked, “I found myself in a cultural environment with no expectations, just warmth and freedom. Rather than leading my imagination to instigate my work, my imagination led me and the work I created, this insular yet peaceful liberated world… I found in Rarotonga.” (Leleisi’uao 2010) The paintings he produced included Cook Islands’ influences into what curator Ron Brownson described as “his invention of present and future visual worlds based on the intersection of Samoan culture with myth, technology and human relationships.” (Brownson 2009) For example, Myriad in Afalana III (2009) (fig. 4.29) drew from the “buzz” of Rarotonga’s market at its busiest time, a Saturday morning, where Leleisi’uao observed social and cultural interactions, which inspired scenes of interaction and
exchange within his paintings. This was due, in part, to the local sense of pride in artistic and cultural expression that has been steadily developing in Rarotonga. Leleisi‘uao, like the visiting artists before him, found it stimulating.

Chapter Summary

Tangaroa wrote that Paringa ‘Ou (1998), a travelling exhibition of New Zealand-based Cook Islands artists, was a turning point for Cook Islands contemporary art from landscape and portraiture to a “practice owing to a combination of factors – the use of foreign materials, modern processes, and an applied theoretical and critical approach in the construction of the artwork.” (Tangaroa 2009a) Although those factors were already apparent in Cook Islands art in Buchanan’s work in the 1990s, there was a shift in contemporary art in the Cook Islands that was largely influenced by New Zealand-born and educated artists that visited and relocated to Rarotonga, such as Ian George, Ani O’Neill, Erurera Nia, and Mahiriki Tangaroa. The homecoming of those artists reinforced the arts community that was established by artists like Teariki and Tavioni. By inviting New Zealand-based artists to Rarotonga to expose local artists to different art forms and trends and to involve Cook Islands artists in the international art world, the Creative New Zealand residency attracted a variety of artists with different practices. The range of artists was crucial for developing a dynamic visual arts community and providing opportunities for aspiring artists in the Cook Islands.

Beginning with the Creative New Zealand residency at the National Museum in 2001, artist residencies have been a site for artistic and cultural exchange in Rarotonga that have supported local artists while introducing visiting artists to the enthusiastic and vibrant arts community there. Visiting artists in residence have benefited from the opportunity to practice in a new environment and challenge themselves, learn, or collaborate with different artists. By focusing on reciprocal exchange, the Cook Islands programmes were beneficial to both visiting and local artists. Tangaroa’s aspirations for a vibrant arts community in Rarotonga were realised through her efforts to find partner organisations to sponsor residencies. The earliest sponsoring agencies overcame challenges and provided an example for subsequent sponsors of residencies in Rarotonga and Creative New Zealand’s subsequent residency in Sāmoa. By ensuring that the residencies received publicity, Tangaroa brought attention to contemporary arts in Rarotonga, which, in turn, promoted artists and garnered patronage.
The artist residencies in the Cook Islands had more pronounced structure than my preceding case studies: each residency was for a predetermined duration and provided the artists with specific resources, tools, and funding. Except for Beachcomber Contemporary Art, the sponsors also had specific criteria for the artists taking up the residencies, which is a distinct difference from residencies in Papua New Guinea and Fiji. Despite these criteria, the examples of residencies in the Cook Islands illustrate a level of flexibility within that structure because each artist had his or her own style of working and conducting workshops or engaging with the community. Yet the residencies produced discernable results, which suited the government agencies’ need for demonstrable outcomes such as exhibitions, artistic growth amongst the visiting and local artists, and social and economic development. For Beachcomber Contemporary Art, the residencies strengthened relationships with artists represented by the gallery and yielded profits through exhibition sales.

The 2002 Bank of the Cook Islands Residency stipulated that applicants must have completed arts courses, (Koteka 2002b) thus limiting the applicant pool although supporting Cook Islands artists. In this way, it was unlike the residencies in Papua New Guinea or the Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture, which were directed towards artists without academic credentials. The majority of Cook Islands artists presented in this chapter attended universities in New Zealand, and, in 2010, eight artists in the Cook Islands earned Masters of Fine Arts from Auckland University of Technology through a correspondence course. With such a focus on education and training, there is an eager anticipation for a permanent training programme in Rarotonga. Such programmes, in tandem with the efforts by local and visiting artists will continue to foster a dynamic and growing appreciation towards contemporary visual arts in the community.

Chapter V on artist residencies in Sāmoa presents Creative New Zealand’s subsequent effort to support contemporary visual arts in the region. The residencies in the Cook Islands and Sāmoa make an interesting and vital comparison to evaluate the particular elements required for further residencies to succeed.
CHAPTER V: DEVELOPING CONTEMPORARY ART AND ART PRACTICE THROUGH AN ARTIST RESIDENCY IN SĀMOA

Introduction

In 2006, Creative New Zealand partnered with the National University of Sāmoa (NUS) to establish an artist residency programme in Apia, Sāmoa. This partnership illustrates Creative New Zealand’s continuation of residencies in the region because it was a replication of the programme in the Cook Islands although with a different type of partner. The residency was awarded to three artists from 2006 to 2009: performing artist and playwright Nathaniel Lees (2007), visual artist and curator Jim Vivieaere (2008), and performance artist Fiona Collins (2009). It was not offered in 2010 but has resumed in 2011. Vivieaere was the only visual artist in residence, and so this case study is brief compared to others. In spite of the limitations of reviewing a single artist’s experience, I have included this case study because it is a useful point of comparison to the Creative New Zealand residency in the Cook Islands, and to further consider the implications of Creative New Zealand’s efforts to support artistic development in the region.

In addition to Vivieaere, key individuals involved in the NUS and Creative New Zealand residency101 were Creative New Zealand staff: Anton Carter, Senior Arts Advisor, Tarisi Vunidilo, Pacific Arts Advisor, and Rose Campbell, Programmes Manager; and NUS staff: Epenesa Esera, Dean of Education, Dawn Rasmussen, Head of Department of Practical and Expressive Arts, and Leua Latai-Leonard, Visual Arts Lecturer. Latai-Leonard was appointed Vivieaere’s peer artist – a contact person to help acquaint him with the university and local community. The university hosted the residency through the Faculty of Education’s Expressive and Practical Arts Department.

Vivieaere’s residency provided an opportunity for a focused case study while also providing another example of the replication of a residency model. Although under different circumstances than Hau‘ofa’s replication of a model from Papua New Guinea, the evaluation of another of Creative New Zealand’s residencies provides examples of how residency models are adopted and adapted. The issues that arose due to relationships with the partner institution, NUS, and its community of staff and students are related to the central paradigms that have been used throughout this thesis. This

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101 I refer to the programme as the Creative New Zealand Sāmoa residency as a practical convention. Similar to the residency in the Cook Islands, it was known locally as the Creative New Zealand residency.
chapter is informed by literature, articles, reviews, reports, interviews, and fieldwork in Sāmoa.102

**Setting the scene**

In 1900, the Samoan islands were partitioned between Germany and the United States of America as Western Samoa (Sāmoa after 1997) and American Samoa. (Crocombe 2001, 687, 703) In 1914, during World War I, New Zealand forces annexed Sāmoa and the New Zealand government administered the country until 1962 when Sāmoa became independent. Sāmoa’s two large volcanic islands, Upolu and Sava’i, and six small islets have a population of approximately 181,000. (Crocombe 2001, 703; Lal and Fortune 2000, 606; Samoa Bureau of Statistics 2007) Sāmoa’s *matai* (a hierarchal system of chiefs based on genealogy) is strongly influential and affects governance, although a parliamentary system has been adopted and the Head of State and Prime Minister are elected.

Sāmoa’s main industries are agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism, while the majority of capital comes from remittances from Samoans abroad and foreign aid. (Crocombe 2001, 703) The Samoan diaspora extends to thirty different countries. (Shuaib 2008) In New Zealand alone, there are 131,000 Samoans, who make up fifty percent of New Zealand’s Pacific population.103 (Statistics New Zealand 2006a, 2010)

There is limited governmental support or infrastructure for contemporary arts in Sāmoa. The Ministry of Education, Sports, and Culture runs the National Museum but does not mention arts in its mission. (Ministry of Education Sports and Culture 2010) An introduction to contemporary art is part of school curriculum, but is a minor aspect of the overall curriculum. (Taeloa 2009) Samoan art teachers often have little experience with contemporary art although they are often well versed in customary arts such as *siapo* (barkcloth). Teachers use texts written by local artists and educators Moemoe Von Riche and Vanya Taule'alo that feature Samoan artists in New Zealand like Fatu Feu’u. (Taeloa 2009)

NUS offers courses in practical and theoretical aspects of visual arts. Other independent art programmes outside the university provide training for creative

102 References to Viviaeare’s acquittal report, “Five Mountains Four Actions One Forest Fire,” indicate the artists’ original report and not the abridged version available from Creative New Zealand.

103 The migration of Samoans to New Zealand began during colonial administration and increased during the post-World War II labour shortage, when New Zealand needed unskilled workers for factories and development projects and Samoans were the largest group of Pacific Islanders to answer this call. (Booth et al. 1976, 19)
individuals around Upolu, Sāmoa’s main island, including Leulumoega School of Fine Arts,104 Tiapapata Arts School, and Beautiful Expressions of Nature. Leulumoega School of Fine Arts was established in 1987 by the Christian Congregational Church and run by Italian artist Ernesto Coter in affiliation with the Congregational Church of Sāmoa. The school trains students in customary Samoan and contemporary art techniques. Cochrane described Leulumoega’s system of teaching through continuous workshops:

more experienced [students] guide the newcomers, but students are also encouraged to initiate their own projects and develop specialities if they are so inclined. The present teachers are all ex-students, including the new head of the art school, Pelenato Liufau. Pelenato says it is easier for the present students to enter the school [than it was when he began his career as an artist], now that it has established its worth in the community, and demonstrated that making art can be a career. (Cochrane and Centre Culturel Tjibaou 2001, 126)

There is little information available about Tiapapata Art Centre; it appears to be a private institution established in 1989 to offer various art courses to children and adults in printmaking, ceramics, fabric printing, carving, and filmmaking. At the end of March 2007, Tiapapata was destroyed by fire and, in 2011, was still in the process of rebuilding.

One of Leulumoega School of Fine Art’s first and most successful students, Penihuro Papalii established an independent arts school in 2000, Beautiful Expressions of Nature (BEN), which is more like the Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture in Fiji than a school in the Western sense. Papalii has created a workshop environment where students learn a variety of contemporary art techniques including wood carving, painting, life drawing, and metal work (figs. 5.1 and 5.2). In 2009, all the students were male. There is exhibition space and Papalii has organised local and international exhibitions for the students. Christina Cioffari, an American arts student who wrote a thesis on the development of art in Sāmoa, noted that both Leulumoega and Beautiful Expressions of Nature encourage communal creativity and artistic production rather than personal artistic styles. (Cioffari 2006, 16) This is a reflection of Samoan cultural values maintained by the strict matai system. Papalii commented that, although he could introduce Asian modernist styles like those he was trained in, he felt obligated to encourage students to create beautiful scenes of Samoan legends to gain the trust and love of Samoans. He added that it takes patience to develop contemporary art in Sāmoa. 105 (Papalii 2009)

104 The school has also been referred to as Leulumoega Fou School of Fine Arts.

105 Papalii attended art school in Japan and has practiced and exhibited his art internationally which is reflected in his teaching philosophy that draws from a variety of ideologies and experiences. Papalii realises that money is often what drives his students and so he introduces them to practical techniques such as gravestone production and carving as well as wood-carving and screen-printing because it is popular in the tourist trade and therefore profitable. His own interest in conceptual art drives him and, in 2009, he was
**Sponsorship**

In 2006, Creative New Zealand was considering alternate locations to initiate another Pacific residency, as the Cook Islands residency was nearing completion of its second three-year cycle. Creative New Zealand’s Programmes Manager Rose Campbell’s report summarised the impetus for locating it in Sāmoa:

Creative New Zealand Samoan Residency at the National University of Sāmoa (NUS) was set up in 2006 as part of the New Zealand/Sāmoa Joint Ministerial Consultations to further strengthen the Sāmoa/New Zealand bilateral relationship. This is in keeping with the principles of close co-operation embodied in the 1962 Treaty of Friendship between New Zealand and Sāmoa.  

Beyond political goals, Sāmoa was a likely location for the residency because Samoans make up half of New Zealand’s Pacific population and Samoan artists, such as Fatu Feu’u, have played an important role in the development of Pacific art in New Zealand.

In a report evaluating the Ministry of Cultural Development and Creative New Zealand’s inaugural residency in the Cook Islands, Mahiriki Tangaroa suggested that it would have been advantageous if Creative New Zealand had sent someone to Rarotonga to investigate the facilities and coordinate with local staff. (Tangaroa 2001, 1) Even if not necessarily due to Tangaroa’s suggestion, Creative New Zealand sent representatives to Sāmoa to establish the residency programme with the university. Senior Pacific Arts Advisor Anton Carter and chair of the Pacific Arts Committee Marilyn Kolohase went to Apia in 2006 to launch a dialogue and develop relationships with the new partner. Carter recalled that, during negotiations, representatives from NUS “wanted an exchange option because they saw the potential of having young artists come here to New Zealand.” (Carter 2009) A New Zealand-based residency for Samoan artists was not an option because Creative New Zealand offered financial support with a model similar to the residency in the Cook Islands, not a new type of residency. The university agreed to the proposal because they recognised its potential to contribute to the development of a sculpture park to display large sculptures made from scrap metal and carved from large trees to generate additional income for the school while displaying the students’ skills to tourists. (Papalii 2009) The 2009 tsunami may have delayed Papalii in his plans.

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106 In 2004, new initiatives began to strengthen the relationship between New Zealand and Sāmoa under the 1962 Treaty of Friendship, which involved a petition about the Citizenship (Western Samoa) Act of 1982. “There was agreement between [Prime Minister Helen Clark and Sāmoan Prime Minister Tuilaepa] to explore and develop a series of initiatives in education, culture, sports and inter-governmental cooperation. This will see already close relations between the two countries further strengthened.” These initiatives include various exchanges at in government, education, and commerce. (beehive.govt.nz 2006)

107 Kolohase is no longer the chair of the Pacific Arts Committee. Since 2006, Kolohase has been the co-director of o’kaioceanikart gallery in Auckland.
Creative Arts department. (Campbell and Vunidilo 2009) Creative New Zealand and NUS agreed that a residency at the university would respond to issues raised by both sponsors:

Lack of professional development opportunities for Pacific performing artists (nationally [and] internationally). Limited profile for Pacific arts within mainstream media of established institutions. Limited artistic links between New Zealand and Pacific Island nations/Sāmoa. Growing demand from [New Zealand] based Pacific artists wanting to maintain artistic and cultural links with Sāmoa (largest Pacific population in NZ). (Carter 2008b, 2)

These concerns helped establish objectives that, for Creative New Zealand, aligned with strategic priorities to provide professional opportunities, grow New Zealand arts internationally, and recognise ethnic communities. (Carter 2008b, 2) The artist in residence would be associated with the Faculty of Education because music, performance, and visual arts are part of pre-service teacher education programme and primary education graduates complete at least two creative arts education subjects. (Joubert 2002, 6) To meet priorities of the Faculty of Education’s Expressive and Practical Arts Department, the residency’s art form would change from year to year according to the university’s and department’s needs. For instance, the first residency was awarded to a performing artist and playwright, Nathaniel Lees. The host’s choice of art form was different from the Cook Islands residencies that were consistently for visual artists working in any media.

The sponsors’ administrative roles were specified, possibly as a response to complications with the Cook Islands’ residency in 2006 when there was little administrative support from the Ministry of Cultural Development for the artist in residence. The residency evaluation clearly stated that Creative New Zealand’s “Pacific adviser runs the admin[istration] process – call for nominations and the [Pacific Arts Committee] (sub-committee) make the final selection, with the host confirming the ‘appropriateness of the recipient’.” (Carter 2008b, 1) Otherwise, the residency was similar to that in the Cook Islands. Creative New Zealand’s call for applicants stated the residency’s aims to:

- provide an opportunity for an established New Zealand-based Pacific artist to interact and share his/her skills with the Samoan arts community; encourage the development of visual arts skills among local school students, Samoan artists and the wider community; provide the selected resident with security of income and access to resources, thus supporting the artist to gain professional development and develop a new body of work; support the artist to market his/her work outside New Zealand. (Creative New Zealand 2008b)
Creative New Zealand provided airfare, contributed up to $1000 (NZ) for materials and resources, and a monthly stipend of $3000 (NZ) for the three months. NUS met accommodation costs, provided work space, appointed a peer artist from within the university, provided local administrative support, and assisted with an exhibition during the residency. (Creative New Zealand 2008b) Accommodation in a compound of university-owned housing was provided for artists in residence but the first artist opted to stay in other university-owned facilities.

The sponsors committed to a three-month residency from 2006 through 2008. (Campbell 2009, 1) Only two residencies took place within that period because the inaugural artist, Nathaniel Lees, selected in 2006, deferred until 2007. Upon the successful evaluation of Lees’ residency, the agreement was extended until 2009 when it would be reviewed based on Creative New Zealand’s and NUS’s findings and evaluations; the sponsors would then decide to continue, adjust, or discontinue the residency. (Campbell 2009, 1) The residency was not offered in 2010 while the sponsors assessed and negotiated another three-year cycle. It resumed in 2011 with a call for applications from artists working in any art form or genre with priority given to visual arts, music, and literature. (Creative New Zealand 2011) A notable change in the residency format in 2011 was funding provided for rental accommodation rather than the previous situation in which artists were housed in the university’s on-campus apartments.

As the university requested a performing artist to begin the residency programme in 2006, New Zealand-born Samoan Nathaniel Lees, a well-known actor, director, and playwright, was selected. Since this research focuses on visual arts, I do not fully analyse Lees’ residency. However, in order to establish the situation encountered by Jim Viviestaere, it is important to note that Creative New Zealand reported Lees’ residency as successful:

The inaugural residency was very successful for the recipient… providing him with a unique opportunity to research first hand ‘traditional Samoan’ way of life… The experience contributed significantly to Mr. Lees’ theatre project [after the residency] and he would not have been able to undertake this research if he had not been a recipient of the residency. Support from [NUS] is well organised and interest to maintain the residency is high due to the positive impact of Mr. Lees. Mr. Lees’ significant profile and status as a ‘leading Samoan actor’ helped to establish a profile for the residency within wider the local Samoan community (not just within the University). (Carter 2008b, 6)

An alternate evaluation came from staff members of NUS’s Faculty of Education that described the residency as beneficial for Lees, but less so for the university. (Esera and Rasmussen 2009) They were disappointed because, although he taught classes as a
required component of the residency, Lees’ project involved research and writing, making it difficult for students and/or the community to get involved. This influenced the decision to request a visual artist for the 2008 residency because the university staff hoped that a visual artist would be more engaging with students and community members. (Esera and Rasmussen 2009) Overall, Lees’ profile brought welcome attention to the residency and, like the Cook Islands residency, signalled that it was necessary to adapt the programme to local conditions and needs.

Criteria

The residency’s selection criteria required that applicants were New Zealand residents with Pacific Islands heritage, who demonstrated a strong track record in the arts with experience giving presentations, teaching or conducting workshops, and interacting with local communities. Additionally, applicants were required to propose a clearly defined project to work on during the residency. (Creative New Zealand 2008b) The successful artist was expected to: conduct a workshop with students, conduct a workshop with emerging or established artists, hold a public exhibition, and complete a written acquittal report upon completion of the residency. (Creative New Zealand 2008b) The university modified the requirement of conducting workshops to require artists in residence to teach two or more weeks of a course, thereby replacing the lecturer.

Artist

Jim Vivieaere 2008

Jim Vivieaere was a multi-media artist and curator. He was born in New Zealand and has Cook Islands, Tahitian, and Chinese heritage. In the 1970s, Vivieaere majored in graphic design at Ilam School of Fine Arts at the University of Canterbury, Christchurch. He began exploring his “Islandness” through art in the mid-1980s and positioned himself “as an Islander.” (Mallon and Pereira 1997, 131) Vivieaere described how this came to be during a presentation at the Auckland Art Gallery in 2004:

I am clearly and overtly raced as Polynesian. Both my parents are Cook Islanders and how society has read and made sense of my physical appearance has meant that I have never had the option of being other than a Cook Islander. Ironically, however, I was raised by Pakeha and thus arrived in early adulthood sociologically European, whilst at the same time obviously not European. The cultural icons, symbols, values, and rituals of the Cook Islands have been important in allowing me to construct an identity in adulthood that is a Cook Island one. But do I have a claim to these when they are no part of my culture in
the sense of what shaped my social milieu during my formative years? (Vivieaere 2004, 5)

Vivieaere grew up with a sense of disconnection from a Pacific identity, which instigated his artistic and curatorial practice on identity and ethnicity. (Vivieaere 2009, 5)

New Zealand art writer Adam Gifford described some of the ways Vivieaere’s curatorial and art projects responded to Pacific cultural identity in New Zealand:

[I]t seems natural he has been called on to act as a guide and interpreter for those wanting to understand the emerging art of migrant and New Zealand-born Pacific Island artists… In a country where identity has become a national obsession, Vivieaere had to develop a Pacific Island identity as an adult. He has been able to navigate and translate for others, while at the same time attempting to deter Palagi [European] institutions and curators from imposing their own notions of Polynesia on an emerging group of artists. (Gifford 2006)

Cultural identity was both a launching site and point of contention in Vivieaere’s art. In 1994, he curated *Bottled Ocean* to parody the colonial gaze by positioning contemporary urban New Zealand Pacific art “against and within the tribal art market,” creating a collective installation distanced from the audience by a Perspex wall and mirrored floor in a gallery devoid of any signage. (Thomas 1996, 319; Vivieaere 1994) Rather than curating the exhibition based on theoretical principles, he made choices and decisions from “an intuitive space.” (Vivieaere 2009, 6) This style of curation is also tied to Vivieaere’s efforts to achieve a space that would reflect the epistemologies of the indigenous artists that produced the art work. Moreover, curating the exhibition was another means for Vivieaere’s personal project to understand identity and ethnicity.

Vivieaere’s first artist residency experience was in France in 1993, sponsored by Moët and Chandon. Also, a year before the residency in Sāmoa, Vivieaere was invited by Michel Tuffery to join him on a residency at the Kaoshiung Museum of Art in Taiwan. Vivieaere was also highly regarded by Creative New Zealand because the organisation awarded him the Pacific Arts Committee’s Senior Arts Award in 2005. These factors seem to have made Vivieaere a strong choice for the Samoan residency in its second year, akin to Carter and Creative New Zealand’s rationale for choosing Feu’u as an experienced and respected second artist in residence in the Cook Islands. This is not to say that Vivieaere’s artistic practice or career was similar to Feu’u’s because the two are distinctively different. However, it is reasonable to assume that in developing a residency programme, a well-known and internationally experienced artist brings special knowledge and understanding that can be used to further develop the programme. Those Pacific Arts Committee members that selected Vivieaere would have been familiar with his
provocative art works and exhibitions, as well as the respect he has earned amongst peers and arts professionals in New Zealand and abroad.

The residency attracted Vivieaere for a number of reasons, the primary one being that his young daughter was attending school in Sāmoa. (Vivieaere 2008a) Vivieaere also applied for the residency because of his “desire to indulge for [three] months of making art… [and because he had never] been to Sāmoa, so [he] was curious and pragmatically it [was] a working holiday.” (Vivieaere 2008a) When Vivieaere wrote those words, he had already begun preparatory research to make effective use of his time in Sāmoa. But if his words were taken out of context, Vivieaere sounds as though he was precisely the type of artist that Michael Tavioni did not want for residencies in Rarotonga, fearing that artists would make a holiday out of the opportunity. However, as was the case for the artists highlighted in Chapter IV, Vivieaere took the residency seriously and produced a range of challenging art works.

Vivieaere proposed a project focused around the Robert Louis Stevenson Museum (fig. 5.3). His interest in Stevenson’s life arose when he acted as a Samoan paramount chief in a French-produced film depicting life in Sāmoa during the nineteenth century, “Aventuriers des Mers du Sud” (2005).108 The implications of a Cook Islander playing a Samoan concerned Vivieaere and he hoped that the time in Sāmoa would help him learn more about Samoan culture to alleviate some of his uneasiness about the role. (Vivieaere 2008b) This gave Vivieaere the idea that visiting the Robert Louis Stevenson Museum in Vailima could be re-contextualised through art. (Vivieaere 2009, 16)

Vivieaere’s project was intended to engage issues of culture, history, and appropriation. He planned to work with ink but recognised that he also needed to be flexible to “work intuitively and make decisions on site and in accordance to [his] given environment.” (Vivieaere 2008a) His style of working intuitively, as artist and curator, was advantageous because it meant that he did not have a concrete set of expectations which, in turn, allowed him to adapt and respond to the local conditions. While Vivieaere’s proposal met the residency criteria “for an established New Zealand-based Pacific artist to interact and share his/her skills with the Samoan arts community,” the proposed project did not indicate how Vivieaere would “encourage the development of visual arts skills among local school students, Samoan artists and the wider community.” This illustrates a pertinent issue for sponsors: how did the choices that the residency’s sponsors made

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108 The French production “Aventuriers des Mers du Sud” was filmed in Cuba in 2005. Vivieaere played Mata’afa Iosefa because of his physical resemblance to the chief. (Moore 2008)
align with their criteria and goals? This question will be discussed in the context of Vivieaere’s projects below.

In his preparatory research, Vivieaere learned that Robert Louis Stevenson referred to himself as a “slinger of ink.” (Harman 2005, 9) “There was this one kind of detail, instead of calling himself a ‘writer’ he called himself an ink-slinger.” (Vivieaere 2008b) Although Stevenson used the phrase to refer to the “comparative idleness” of self-expression and art in contrast to the professions of his family members, such as engineers, (Harman 2005, 9) Vivieaere used the term to honour Stevenson’s creative process more than the comparatively staid title of writer. (Vivieaere 2009, 16) This inspired Vivieaere to appropriate the action of ink-slinging to make art which also gave him ample potential for experimentation. He explained that “[c]onceptually and stylistically the action and location were paramount.” (2009, 16) This preparatory conceptualisation was integral to the work produced in Sāmoa because the art required active or physical engagement that created a thematic consistency throughout the residency: slinging, whether it was ink, paint, dirt, or rubbish. Most of the work he produced during the residency also had a collaborative aspect. The art works were process-based and site-specific works; for instance, ink-slinging at Robert Louis Stevenson’s grave and memorial site on Mt. Vaea.

Stevenson became a guiding point of entry for a series of ink-slinging works. Vivieaere responded to the experience of being at Stevenson’s grave and memorial by creating a series of ink works on canvas. Vivieaere explained his emphasis was on conceptual connotation rather than portraying specific imagery. He said, “It’s got no meaning except that I did put this little canvas on top of [Stevenson’s] grave and I went flicky, flicky, flicky… All it is is blue ink that Jim had created on top of his gravestone.” (Vivieaere 2008b) Vivieaere’s focus was on the process of slinging: a reflective and symbolic action. Vivieaere asked Tuifao Tumua, from the university’s Multi-Media Unit, to film the slinging because he felt that capturing the experience was essential to the body of work. (Vivieaere 2008b) Filming created another work that contextualised the process and environment Vivieaere was responding to. The recording was also practical for showing his art making process to students and audiences.

Vivieaere was also interested in using the historic site of Robert Louis Stevenson’s home that is now a museum dedicated to honouring the writer, as a site for creating works during the residency (fig. 5.3). Vivieaere continued the ink-slinging project by obtaining permission from the Robert Louis Stevenson Museum’s manager to work
on the upper veranda (fig. 5.4), where he created a series of “stained” images on paper. For the works, he mixed sumi ink with seawater to signify his “Pacificness.” (Moore 2008) The ink mixture also represented Vivieaere’s Chinese and Cook Islands heritage. Similar to those made at the grave, the untitled works (fig. 5.5) did not have meaning, but, again, it was the process of working with ink at Stevenson’s home that paid tribute to the writer.

Vivieaere’s work shifted to collaborative projects when he began the teaching requirement of the residency. He was required to teach two and a half weeks of a foundation visual arts course, and was given free-range to do what he wanted by the course convener Leua Latai-Leonard. (Vivieaere 2008b) This seems to have been a source of difficulties that I discuss within the paradigm of cultural exchange. Without guidance from his peer artist/course convener, Vivieaere decided to engage students in his art production so that they could learn about his artistic practice, directly carrying out the department’s desire for engagement with students. His subsequent projects took place at his university apartment. I discuss three of the projects: the garden project, “Five Mountains Four Actions One Forest Fire”, and interior/gallery works. Vivieaere’s method of teaching by involving students meant that the ensuing artistic exchange was part of the reciprocal benefits of this type of residency; he fulfilled the university’s requirements, while also taking advantage of the opportunity to collaborate with local emerging artists.

The garden project was prompted by Vivieaere’s dismay at the condition of his university-owned apartment. In his own words, “I opened my backdoor and it was like a rubbish dump” (fig. 5.6). (Vivieaere 2008b) He acknowledged that his hosts were conscious of his concerns and offered to find him other accommodation, but Vivieaere decided to challenge himself and transform the apartment into a site-specific installation and gallery of works. He said that it also provided him with a sense of rhythm in his daily life. (Vivieaere 2008b) Moreover, the process-based project was seemingly the epitome of what a residency aims to do: to provide an artist with the opportunity and resources to dedicate oneself to art making for a period of time. The desire to create a site-specific installation was a development from other projects Vivieaere had worked on in the past. After Bottled Ocean he realised, “I’ve found my direction; it’s to do installations. I like the idea of just arriving on site, and doing what comes into your head, working to stringent deadlines, and the fact that it’s a ‘oncer’. I like the idea of the work having a lifespan.”
The garden project was the embodiment of having a lifespan because of the human efforts and natural products such as taro. The rhythm in daily life came from working in the garden every morning and evening raking, weeding, and watering. Landscaping the garden became a project on which students, the university’s gardeners, and maintenance staff collaborated with Vivieaere. They planted trees and piled rocks to create sculptural elements in the garden (fig. 5.7). This was Vivieaere’s effort to engage students in the creation of site-specific art work and “allow students to have an experiential sense of the working methods and creative process by an established Pacific Islander artist.” (Vivieaere 2009, 7) The rock mountains became the backdrop for a short film in the garden called “Five Mountains Four Actions One Forest Fire.” Five mountains were the rock piles; four actions referred to Vivieaere, the cameraman, and two student assistants; and the forest fire was a bonfire of dried garden refuse, contained within a circle of stones in the garden. This was also the culmination of the ink-slinging works (fig. 5.8) when Vivieaere rolled out twenty metres of rice paper and began spattering ink. The scene was dramatic with the sun shining down on him engrossed in his actions as strong winds tore the paper and fed the fire’s flames. Vivieaere made a spontaneous decision to burn most of the work, since he knew that it was preserved on film and there was “nothing precious about it.” (Vivieaere 2008b)

The project was successful in introducing an innovative style and process of visual art that students and the local community were not used to. For the students involved, it conveyed the notion that practice and the development of ideas can be as or, in the case of the burned paper, more significant than the end product. This style of artistic exchange or instruction was different from any of the other workshops conducted by artists in residence in the other case studies. While Veronica Vaevae’s use of video art works challenged artists in Rarotonga with an unfamiliar and mostly unavailable media, Vivieaere dared students to think conceptually and demonstrated that exotic or expensive materials were not essential for innovative art.

Vivieaere involved students in the garden project, gave classroom seminars, and took students on field trips to demonstrate various elements of his art and curatorial practice. For one of the class activities, Vivieaere assigned students to make stencils that

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109 Vivieaere was also making reference to the residency project with Michel Tuffery at Kaoshiung Museum of Art “One Forest, Two Dogs, Three Boats” (2007). On the museum grounds, Tuffery and Vivieaere created a site-specific installation on a grass mound with dogs positioned amongst a forest of replanted painted bamboo with coconuts placed within a vaka formation.
they used to decorate the walls of the bathroom and kitchen of his apartment (fig. 5.9). (Vivieaere 2008b) The stencils were mostly based on tattoo motifs and floral designs. The collaborative installation was exhibited during the last week of the residency with a series of the ink-slinging works and images from his past projects displayed throughout the apartment (figs. 5.9, 5.10, and 5.11). Reporting in the *Samoan Observer*, Marj Moore wrote: “Entering his NUS home is walking into a museum with his work an expression of his experiences in Sāmoa and the placement of items a reflection of his beliefs and his experience as a Curator.” (Moore 2008) Vivieaere told Moore: “A lot of this is a diary rather than making art to sell… My imagery is totally oblique. The documentary film [of the ink-slinging] is my accountability of my time here while the photographic essay contextualises all my actions; engagements with people.” (Moore 2008) The overall message of the exhibition was that there is really no separation between art and life in Vivieaere’s practice. (Moore 2008) The art works were an innovative way of expressing the potential of visual arts to students and others that attended the exhibition. Furthermore, the exhibition was an example of how he simultaneously involved students in the residency and fulfilled the teaching requirement while challenging the conventions of visual arts because he did not produce a set of paintings or sculptures as the university staff actually expected.

Similar to the response to Nathaniel Lees’ residency, the university staff had mixed reactions to Vivieaere’s artistic process and practice. Epenesa Esera, Dean of Education and Senior Lecturer and Dawn Rasmussen, Head of Department Practical and Expressive Arts explained that they were initially surprised when they met Vivieaere and learned about his artistic practice because they assumed that since the residency called for a visual artist he would be working with more “traditional” media such as painting or sculpture. (Esera and Rasmussen 2009) In response to Vivieaere’s garden project, Esera and Rasmussen wondered if “cleaning the backyard is ‘art’?” (Esera and Rasmussen 2009) They were disappointed that his teaching method was more “sporadic” than they were accustomed to and that he did not arrive with a plan. (Esera and Rasmussen 2009) However, since he was teaching two weeks of an established course, it seems unusual that Vivieaere would plan lectures or seminars prior to arriving to Sāmoa without consultation with the course convenor. When asked by Vivieaere, Latai-Leonard did not provide specific curriculum for him to follow and so he took a practical course of action and taught the students about his art making process by involving them. As I see it, involvement is the benefit of having an actual artist in residence: students can actively
engage with and experience how the artist works. Esera and Rasmussen felt that Vivieaere’s methods did not match their students’ aptitude or what they wanted for them. (Esera and Rasmussen 2009) On the other hand, Creative New Zealand’s assessor, Rose Campbell, and the university’s residency committee praised Vivieaere’s residency during Campbell’s visit in April 2009. This critique illustrates how residencies rarely please everyone involved. Moreover, the expectations of the sponsors changed over time. After Lees’ residency, NUS staff wanted more collaboration; after Vivieaere’s residency, they wanted a more traditional artist.

Esera and Rasmussen’s comments were further detailed in a report produced by Latai-Leonard at the conclusion of the residency. Latai-Leonard stated that the residency was “a great opportunity for students and the various faculties of NUS to experience working with a practicing artist of Jim Vivieaere’s calibre.” (Latai-Leonard 2008, 4) She noted that Vivieaere’s process of art making addressed a variety of art techniques and issues faced by Pacific artists that were significant for students although she remarked that some of the anticipated goals were not reached, although she did not specify them. (Latai-Leonard 2008, 4) Latai-Leonard’s report alluded to a precarious relationship with Vivieaere. Problems transpired between them as a result of insufficient communication about expectations. 110 Latai-Leonard made a comprehensive list of suggestions for future visiting artists that confirmed several concerns expressed to me by Esera and Rasmussen during an interview, including several points about an expectation that artists in residence conduct themselves ‘professionally’. Latai-Leonard also proposed that for 2009-2010 the programme included an exchange of NUS students and local artists between Sāmoa and New Zealand, repeating an initial request made by the university during planning stages of the residency with Creative New Zealand. (Latai-Leonard 2008, 4) On a positive note, she suggested that the apartment Vivieaere had essentially renovated as an installation

110 Latai-Leonard’s recommendations for the next artist in residence: “Please adhere to professional dress code of the university. The Faculty of Education which hosts the Artist in Residence Program trains future teachers. (For example please wear a belt, pull your pants up, and button up shirt). Drinking alcohol with students is a big NO! NO! Faculty members assigned to work with Artist in Residence do work fulltime. They have a heavy teaching load and commitments to the University. Please be sensitive when prior arrangements are made to use facilities. Stick to the times and dates agreed on. The Art room is the responsibility of the NUS Visual Arts Lecturer. Any equipment that goes missing comes out of their pocket. If used please make sure windows and doors are locked, taps, lights and fans are turned off! Please check your electricity meter so you don’t panic at 2:00am in the morning when the power goes out! Attach your keys on a key chain and keep it on you to avoid lost keys, and having them duplicated. It does become expensive. If you donate an artwork to someone please don’t change your mind after you have given it to them as a gift. You are here to assist. Be informed, familiarize and be sensitive to the Samoan way of life or “fa’a Sāmoa”. The staff allocated to work with you is your host. Please be sensitive of your expectations of them. They do have family obligations and cannot tend to your needs twenty four hours a day. NUS will have a program for you of what they feel NUS would greatly benefit from your stay. Please be honest if you feel that our expectations are too high and work with us.” (Latai-Leonard 2008, 3)
project remain an on-going space for the artist residency programme and a gallery space for exhibitions by visual arts students. (Latai-Leonard 2008, 4)

Although issues arose, these did not hamper what was achieved overall by the residency. Vivieaere carried out his proposed project and he found the residency beneficial for his artistic development. Although there were no evaluation reports by the students, it appears that they had a unique opportunity to work closely with an influential and widely acclaimed artist in practices they might not have understood without the direct experience of participating in conceptual installation art.

Vivieaere concluded, “I had an extremely positive three months and feel I was able to make a contribution to young local artists as well as producing an interesting and cohesive body of work.” (Vivieaere 2009, 36) Vivieaere appreciated the opportunity to do things he had not done for years such as a series of installation works at his apartment. The experience also prompted personal reflection on what he would do next in his life, which he saw as a valuable outcome. (Vivieaere 2008b)

**Cultural exchange**

Vivieaere described his research on Robert Louis Stevenson as a means of connecting and learning more about Samoan history and the cultural dynamics. (Vivieaere 2008b) This stemmed from his concern about the implications of a New Zealand-born Cook Islander playing the part of a high chief in the film about Ŝāmoa. These motives relate to connections amongst indigenous people of the Pacific Islands, such as those emphasised by Hau'ofa, (Hau'ofa 2008b; Hau'ofa et al. 1993) but also the distinctions that make the region unique. The cultural connection or exchange that Vivieaere sought was dependent on the opportunity to develop his artistic practice in Oceania. While his residency opportunities in France and Taiwan were important for different reasons, Vivieaere’s long-standing interest in Oceanic/Pacific identity and ethnicity meant that the residency offered an important opportunity for reciprocal cultural exchange: he learned about the dynamics of life in Ŝāmoa and the local community gained knowledge about New Zealand-based contemporary visual artists. The art works he produced explored notions of his complex identity not only Cook Islands Maori and Polynesian but also Chinese. Ink-slinging at Robert Louis Stevenson’s grave responded to the Scottish writer’s experience in Ŝāmoa and incorporated symbolic elements of Vivieaere’s cultural identity of Cook Islander and Chinese. (Moore 2008; Vivieaere 2008b) Researching and reflecting on a European man’s time in Ŝāmoa caused
Vivieaere to reflect on his experience growing up as European and connecting to his “Islandness” later in life. This outcome demonstrates another type of cultural engagement because Vivieaere investigated and reflected upon his cultural background and the discourse of identity through the conceptual art works.

Issues around culture were raised by Latai-Leonard in relation to the personal dynamics and communication difficulties between her and Vivieaere. She wrote:

I found my experience working with Vivieaere challenging and thought-provoking at times and have come away rejuvenated as an artist and educator. There was difficulty in communicating and high expectations [by] Jim which I found frustrating and overly demanding but we managed to iron them out. It is important to point out that [NUS] is a developing university and for future artist in residence to come prepared that Sāmoa is very different from New Zealand. (Latai-Leonard 2008, 4)

The conflict between Latai-Leonard and Vivieaere led to her offering a public apology to Vivieaere. Latai-Leonard denied that she was forced to apologise as indicated by Vivieaere in his report to Creative New Zealand. (Vivieaere 2009) She explained that it was fa’a Sāmoa, a “way of smoothing out misunderstandings and to see things from the Samoan perspective. We [Samoans] have different values and these values determine how we operate as a culture and having an open mind is very beneficial.” (Latai-Leonard 2008, 4)

Whether those issues resulted from cultural misunderstandings or a conflict of personalities is beside the point here, instead it is important to recognise that although the Pacific heritage was required for Creative New Zealand’s residencies it could not pre-empt all problems and miscommunications. Furthermore, the issues raised highlights the learning process that was a part of every artist residency and changed according to the participants and administrative staff.

Vivieaere did not comment on cultural exchange as much as some of the artists in residence in the Cook Islands did, such as Feu’u or Marsters. There are several viable reasons why cultural exchange did not emerge as a central pursuit for Vivieaere, such as the prominence of Samoan culture in New Zealand. Vivieaere wrote that he felt connected to Samoans as a Polynesian and because his daughter is a quarter Samoan and his grandson is half Samoan. (Vivieaere 2008a)

**Social and Economic Development**

Creative New Zealand’s Pacific residencies in the Cook Islands and Sāmoa have functioned as a development tool. The examples in the Cook Islands demonstrated that when bolstered by local programmes, Creative New Zealand’s residencies were more
effective because they became part of a wider network of programmes that also provided local artists with opportunities equal to what New Zealand-based artists were offered. Moreover, when Creative New Zealand decided it had met its objectives and/or discontinued the programme, the local proponents for arts maintained artistic developments set in motion by the residencies. Since the residency in Sāmoa is still a relatively recent initiative in comparison (2001-2006), it is difficult to fully gauge how it has influenced or affected the arts community in Sāmoa. Since 2008, Fatu Feu’u has been planning a private artist residency programme based in Poutasi, Upolu, and anticipates hosting the first artists in 2011. Unlike the previous examples in this thesis, Fatu Feu’u’s residency will charge artists for accommodation, studio space, and related resources. However, in a global context, it is routine for artists to pay for or obtain their own funding for residencies. Although as yet there are no outcomes to evaluate from Feu’u’s proposed residency, I mention it as potentially a significant development that will complement the existing programmes.

From a management and administrative perspective, Vivieaere’s residency at NUS was successful, particularly when viewed as a new initiative. Several months after his residency, Campbell met with the residency committee at NUS to discuss it, identify issues and find solutions, and determine the art form and artist profile for the 2009 residency. (Campbell 2009, 1) The university’s artist in residence committee included several members of the university’s administration including Rasmussen and Latai-Leonard. Campbell reported that NUS and the wider community valued the artist in residence scheme and considered it successful in delivering goals and were “keen to continue.” (Campbell 2009, 2) The goals that the residency had achieved included bringing new thinking, a fresh approach, and inspiration to young artists. The committee praised Vivieaere as “an exceptional person with a diverse set of skills, who was prepared to share his life as an artist with the community” and was particularly impressed because he involved not only arts students but also horticulture students. (Campbell 2009, 2) The residency committee agreed to continue the residency and make efforts to improve their hosting capacity by increasing the resources within the department of Expressive and Practical Arts. Creative New Zealand also contributed to the effectiveness of the residency by selecting artists with an interest in education and the capacity to fit into the university’s environment. (Campbell 2009, 2) They decided that the 2009 artist residency would focus on performing arts with a secondary focus on visual arts. Fiona Collins was awarded the 2009 residency and had a successful residency despite arriving shortly before
the September 2009 tsunami. She was subsequently hired as lecturer in performing arts at NUS, which clearly confirms that the residency was successful for both Collins and the university.\footnote{I include this within the evaluation of social and economic development because, in this case, the residency became a tool for assessing potential employees even though it was never advertised that way.}

Campbell’s and the university committee’s evaluation of the first two years of the residency highlights that it was still at an early stage where the sponsors were learning what a residency could offer the university and wider community in Apia, which indicates a difficulty with residencies being only three years in duration. The goals and subsequent outcomes reflect the university’s desire to support their arts students and programmes but do not indicate a desire to use the residency to develop arts industries or programmes outside of the university.

The wider community are aware of the residency and a number expressed a view that not enough artists from contemporary practices visit Sāmoa. The community welcomes and values having these visitors in their midst and for the opportunity to be exposed to new ideas and ways of thinking about art. (Campbell 2009, 4)

On this point, those involved in Sāmoa could use the Cook Islands as an example because the Creative New Zealand residency and Bank of the Cook Islands In-country Training Programme brought a number of prestigious New Zealand-based artists that often maintained relationships in Rarotonga after the residency.

\textit{Chapter Summary}

The Creative New Zealand and NUS artist residency demonstrates how a residency model has been introduced in another location. In a new environment with new co-sponsors and participants, the residency changed. A marked difference was rotating the art form of the residency between different art forms, and the emphasis on formal education. In this new form, the residency model was adapted to work for the sponsors. Tarisi Vunidilo, Creative New Zealand’s Auckland-based administrator for the residency in 2007 and 2008, explained that selection of the art form by the university “makes the residency real and connects [it] to the grassroots.” (Vunidilo 2009) Yet the residency is run by two sizable organisations, unlike Beier’s initiatives in Papua New Guinea, which were more characteristically examples of grassroots programmes because she began artist residencies in her home with limited materials and, initially, through word-of-mouth rather than the advertised and well-funded programme in Sāmoa run through international cooperation. Although the programme is not necessarily grassroots,
it responded to local needs. There are benefits from alternating the art form of a residency according to the host’s needs, even though the decision was a compromise by Creative New Zealand to compensate for not satisfying the university’s request for a residency in New Zealand for Samoan artists.

Vivieaere’s many years of international experience as an artist and curator contributed to what was lauded as a successful residency by Creative New Zealand and the university’s residency committee. The residency in Sāmoa was not the first time that Vivieaere’s practice and process was questioned, as he had previously challenged preconceived perceptions of art through exhibitions like *Bottled Ocean*. His residency experience provides a useful example of an established artist handling difficulties tactfully. Even though Esera, Rasmussen, and Latai-Leonard raised issues about Vivieaere and his conduct, they remarked that the university sought a visual artist for the 2009 residency to challenge and engage students and staff and Vivieaere had accomplished those objectives. As Vivieaere told Moore, it was important to him to be responsible to the sponsors and community during the residency. The range of art works and projects he produced demonstrate that he did not simply take the residency to spend time with his daughter or have a holiday. The forty-page completion report he submitted to Creative New Zealand further supports his appreciation of the residency opportunity and his professionalism.

This residency had less direct engagement with the general community, rather the university’s students and staff were the primary audience. It was hoped that the staff and students would take their experience and share it with the community to stimulate other artistic exchanges and projects. Vivieaere challenged audiences at NUS with innovative art forms and styles that they had not been exposed to before. While Papalii explained that it takes time and patience to introduce new art forms in Sāmoa, Vivieaere was not limited by local social or cultural conventions that might prohibit Papalii and other local artists from presenting challenging art works. Nevertheless, Vivieaere had enough familiarity with and knowledge of Samoan culture to respect local conventions, aside from Latai-Leonard’s concerns. With the continuation of the Creative New Zealand residency and the anticipated start of Feu’u’s residency, there is reason to believe that a dynamic and widespread contemporary arts community is growing in Sāmoa, further fuelled by the students that have been inspired by and collaborated with artists like Vivieaere.
CHAPTER VI: FURTHERING THE REACH – TAUTAI CONTEMPORARY ART TRUST’S RESIDENCY IN AUCKLAND

Introduction

This chapter examines an exchange that reverses the previous two case studies to demonstrate the adaptable nature of residencies in response to the perceived needs of artists. Maintaining the chronological progression of this thesis, this case study presents residencies in 2009 and 2010, when Tautai Contemporary Pacific Arts Trust offered a five to six week residency in Auckland to visual artists from the Pacific Islands. This example illustrates a different residency format because, rather than providing training or setting requirements to produce a body of work or conduct workshops, Tautai provided artists in residence with the “gift of time” for professional development as the artist sees fit. This format supported artists in different ways not necessarily based on artistic practice or production. The artists in residence have been Papua New Guinean painter Jeffry Feeger (2009), Kanaka Maoli sculptor and tattoo artist Jordan Souza (2010), and Solomon Islander painter and tattoo artist Selwyn Palmer (2011).  

Tautai receives a significant portion of its funding from Creative New Zealand and so this is another residency that has been, to some extent, shaped by the organisation’s strategic goals. However, rather than analysing Creative New Zealand’s involvement as a background sponsor, I focus on the location and implications of inviting artists to New Zealand which, while a neighbour, is more Westernised than, for instance, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. With its numerous institutions, considerable arts infrastructure, and governmental support, New Zealand is an international gateway of sorts for island-based artists, with the market to support contemporary arts, as well as organisations to provide professional support and financial opportunities.

This chapter highlights the importance of professional networking, in addition to cultural exchange, as a valid and valuable outcome from a residency. While many residencies result in a range of art works that can be analysed to gauge the effects and/or results of residencies, outcomes of the Tautai residency can only be evaluated through an artist’s subsequent endeavours. The review of Tautai’s residency is not reliant on art produced, rather on experience gained and networks formed or strengthened, which can be as valuable an outcome as the production of a body of work. Thus, it expands

112 Although Palmer’s residency falls outside of the time frame for this thesis and I did not have sufficient time to adequately research him, I interviewed him during his residency out of a personal interest.
perceptions of what a residency can be. Although the outcomes of these residencies are yet to be fully realised, the immediate results point towards the benefits and challenges of a non-production based residency model. Yet Feeger and Souza expressed disappointment related to the lack of support for art making during the residency, which prompted me to consider what artists have come to expect from programmes because of the meaning associated with the term ‘residency’.

Following the structure of previous case studies, the Tautai residency is analysed through the thematic paradigms. Unlike the other chapters, I do not provide a historic and demographic introduction to New Zealand because I have assumed readers have some familiarity with the country. I do, however, note some differences between New Zealand and the other case study locations and provide examples of national opportunities for artists of Pacific heritage as background. Within the paradigm of sponsorship, I discuss the impetus for and formation of the residency and outline its criteria. In addition to the artists in residence, Jeffry Feeger and Jordan Souza, other key individuals involved are Tautai’s manager Christina Jeffery and Deborah White, consultant for the development of the residency and owner/director of Whitespace Contemporary Art gallery. After describing Feeger’s and Souza’s residencies, I focus on Feeger in the section about social and economic development because of the international exhibition and sales opportunities for him that arose after the residency as well as the leadership role he took on in Port Moresby by organising exhibitions and trying to encourage his colleagues. I analyse cultural exchange in relation to Souza’s experience because interviews held during his first week and final week in Auckland suggest a significant shift in his expectations of culture in regards to the residency.

This chapter is informed by multiple interviews with Feeger, Souza, Jeffery, and White as well as several of Tautai’s member artists. I was fortunate to have the opportunity to interview Feeger and Souza at the start of each residency and then shortly before each departed Auckland. I also interviewed Feeger again in 2009 while he was in Auckland. Additional information was drawn from media coverage of the residencies and other publications. It is important to acknowledge that, at the time of writing this thesis, just over a year has passed since Souza’s residency. Since these are the most recent residencies, there is little evaluation other than the artists’ and sponsors’ personal reflections on their experiences. Unlike Creative New Zealand, Tautai does not require

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113 I made efforts to contact Souza for a post-residency interview through an email address that we regularly corresponded through while he was in Auckland. However, my emails sent in September, October, and December 2010 received no response.
artists to write an assessment at the conclusion of the residency. Furthermore, Tautai does not produce a formal evaluation of the residency. Feeger utilises public social networking internet sites to publicise his activities and exhibitions, while Souza does not, so there is more evidence of the effects of the residency on Feeger’s career.

**Situating residencies in New Zealand**

New Zealand offers a range of possibilities for artists that are not available elsewhere in Oceania. Educational institutions and organisations such as Creative New Zealand offer a wide variety of opportunities for artists, including residencies. Chapters IV and V described Creative New Zealand’s strategic goals to support artists of Pacific heritage, which reflect national priorities. Those chapters also indicated the strong ties between New Zealand and countries like the Cook Islands and Sāmoa resulting from political ties and large diasporic communities. New Zealand’s Pacific population makes up 6.9 percent of the total population of almost 4.5 million. (Statistics New Zealand 2010, 8) While New Zealand shares historic and genealogic ties with other Polynesian island groups, its circumstances are quite different, particularly with regard to opportunities in creative industries. Those same ties make New Zealand an especially advantageous location for island-based artists to reach new audiences and gain exposure to a Westernised art community and market while remaining within the region.

Tautai’s residency for island-based artists should be differentiated from other opportunities for New Zealand-based artists of Pacific heritage within New Zealand, such as the Macmillan Brown Pacific Artist Residency (1996-present) co-sponsored by University of Canterbury’s Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies in Christchurch and Creative New Zealand. This residency required artists to produce a body of work during the three-month residency and provided artists with studio space, materials, living stipend, and administrative support. As previously discussed, the Macmillan Brown residency served as a model for external residencies in the Cook Islands and Sāmoa. Many prominent artists of Pacific heritage working in New Zealand have held this award, including painters, sculptors, writers, actors, mixed media artists, performance artists, and choreographers. Some of the artists that have been awarded the residency are included in other contexts in this thesis, such as Fatu Feu’u (1996), Michel Tuffery (1997), John Pule (1998), Andy Leleisi’uao (1999), and Filipe Tohi (2001);[^114] those artists have used the...
residency to explore issues described by art historian Karen Stevenson as “environmental degradation, socio-economic realities of migration, stereotypes and the perceived exoticism of the Pacific — each is very real and the foundation of Pacific art today.” (K. Stevenson 2004, 23) Although the Macmillan Brown residency is not profiled in this thesis in an effort to focus on residencies that serve island-based artists and communities, it is an important and ongoing example of Creative New Zealand’s efforts to support Pacific artists within New Zealand. Tautai Contemporary Pacific Arts Trust is another example of an initiative supported by Creative New Zealand for artists of Pacific heritage in New Zealand, receiving recurring funding from Creative New Zealand, which makes up the majority of the trust’s annual budget.

**Sponsorship**

In 1988, Fatu Feu’u along with a group of friends and supporters founded a charitable trust to accelerate the development of contemporary Pacific art and artists in New Zealand: Tautai Contemporary Pacific Arts Trust. Deborah White, one of the original supporters of Tautai and director of Whitespace Contemporary Art in Auckland, described the impetus for the charitable trust:

> Since the early coming together of a new group of artists who through their Pacific Island heritage had individual but related backgrounds which was influencing their work, it has been a journey of exploration and achievement towards a positive future for artists. (White 2008b, 5)

The Samoan word *tautai* means navigator, a person learned in other aspects of seamanship, or a leader. The references to the ocean and leadership are an apt metaphor for what were aspirations and have become accomplishments for Pacific artists’ exploration of contemporary arts in New Zealand.

Tautai began as a small gallery in Auckland and has become an organisation that supports visual artists of Pacific heritage in New Zealand. (Tautai Contemporary Pacific Arts Trust 2008a, 1) The trust’s focus shifted from exhibiting art to assisting artists through advocacy programmes to meet the growth of Pacific visual arts in New Zealand. Tautai is governed by a Board of Trustees, which includes three artists, and employs a fulltime manager and two part-time staff that provide creative support at an office in Auckland. Tautai does not act as a dealer gallery or agent for the member artists, it “operates on the understanding that the [member] artists remain independent of Tautai

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Trust and come together through their Tautai connection to participate in events.”

(Tautai Contemporary Pacific Arts Trust 2008a, 1) The majority of active members are in Auckland, where sixty-seven percent of New Zealand’s Pacific population reside, (Auckland Regional Council 2007, 4) but Tautai hosts events in other cities as well. Events include local and international group exhibitions curated by Tautai members, art workshops for secondary and tertiary students, performances, and symposiums that have brought together artists from around the region. Members are profiled on Tautai’s website115 and regular newsletters and events listings are sent out across the organisation’s networks.

Tautai’s manager, Christina Jeffery, remarked that Tautai has “always struggled with the idea of how we could help and work to support artists based [in] the Pacific in their home nations. And this, the idea of the residency seemed like a good way to provide some practical support to those people.” (Jeffery 2010b) The residency was established to meet the needs of Tautai’s member artists and island-based artists by connecting them through the residency. Jeffery’s explanation was similar to Carter’s comments that the impetus for Creative New Zealand’s Pacific residencies was that many New Zealand-based Pacific artists were interested in connecting with the islands. Jeffery said that the residency is an opportunity for Tautai’s members to spend time with the visiting artist and “to touch base with the grassroots… [because] a lot of our artists are still connected and have family ties… in the islands.” (Jeffery 2010b)

In 2007, Tautai initiated research into hosting an artist residency. Deborah White was hired by Tautai as a consultant to research and write a programme prospectus, which was consequently used to design the residency. (Jeffery 2010b; White 2008a, 2008b) White researched a number of national and international residencies and spoke to artists about what worked and did not work in their residency experiences. (White 2008a) However, the artists she spoke to were New Zealand-based artists, some of Pacific heritage, who had held national and international residencies. (White 2008a) While I understand the limitations of a consultancy and have not critiqued other sponsors for failing to canvas potential participants, I was surprised that more efforts were not made to survey artists practicing in the islands since Tautai wanted to connect with them.

One of White’s assessments was that residencies did not have to require production of a body of work, exhibitions, teaching, or presentations to be a productive experience for artists, and so she proposed that Tautai provide a stimulating vocational

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115 Tautai’s website is www.tautai.org.
experience in which the visiting artist would have opportunities to visit galleries and museums, research other artists, build networks, and take in the sights and sounds of Auckland during March, “Celebrate Pasifika” month. She used the phrase “the gift of time” to describe the residency. (White 2008b, 3) This phrase is commonly employed to describe residencies, although internationally it implies the time to focus on artistic production. This style of residency was new for Oceania. As the other case studies have demonstrated, residencies have primarily been an opportunity to focus on producing art. There was also another rationale behind this alternate model of residency – Tautai was able to reduce costs associated with studio space, materials, and exhibiting the artist’s work. Moreover, this also meant that the residency could be shorter because there were no specific requirements for artists in residence to carry out. The funding aspect was not necessarily the prime reason for an experience-based residency rather than production-based programme, but it was certainly a major consideration when designing a residency programme that Tautai could manage fiscally and with limited staff.

Since Tautai is a charitable trust (with the majority of its operational budget provided by Creative New Zealand), the organisers sought a partner to fund the residency. In 2009, the Wellington-based Pacific Cooperation Foundation provided sponsorship. Jeffery explained that Pacific Cooperation Foundation’s “sponsorship was made even sweeter because their ambition is to strengthen New Zealand and Pacific relationships and to develop networks, and it just seemed like a marriage made in heaven.” (Jeffery 2009) In 2009, the Pacific Cooperation Foundation’s strategic goals were to foster understanding of the Pacific and New Zealand’s identity as a Pacific Nation, promote stability and economic sustainability in the region, and engage with and provide support to institutions in the region. (Pacific Cooperation Foundation 2008) The foundation met these goals by providing funding to institutions and individuals through funding schemes and sponsoring conferences focused on capacity building in the region. (Pacific Cooperation Foundation 2008)

The Pacific Cooperation Foundation’s strategic goals and organisational structure changed in 2010 and it was unable to continue sponsorship. Another sponsor could not be found, so Tautai decided to draw from a discretionary budget outside the recurring budget from Creative New Zealand.116 (Jeffery 2010b) After the 2010 artist in residence

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116 The discretionary part of Tautai’s budget came from any savings made from annual funding from Creative New Zealand and ASB Bank, which Jeffery noted was usually inadvertent savings. Annually, Tautai proposed a budget to Creative New Zealand that included the residency. Creative New Zealand approved the budget and programme. (Jeffery 2010a)
Jordan Souza was confirmed, the United States Embassy provided some financial support. Jeffery said that Tautai would continue to seek sponsorship for future residencies regardless of sponsorship from partner organisations.

The timing of the residency, late-February to early April, was set to coincide with Pacific arts events in Auckland. Every March, Auckland hosts the Pasifika Festival, which includes a one-day festival attended by more than a hundred thousand visitors, and numerous performances, exhibitions, and presentations are held across Auckland throughout the month. In 2009 and 2011, the biennial Auckland Arts Festival and Fringe Festival also took place during March. Therefore, the late-February starting date was strategic for the visiting artist to have access to Auckland’s premier events. Tautai typically hosted exhibitions or activities during March and so there would be opportunities for the visiting artist to meet or join Tautai’s member artists at these events. After 2011, the residency will be offered biennially to coincide with Pasifika and the Auckland Arts Festival, which also allows Tautai more time for fundraising between residencies.

In the other case studies, there was a distinct expectation of the production of art works and often workshops that differentiates their format from Tautai’s “gift of time.” I evaluate the experiences of Feeger and Souza and profile how Tautai has tried to achieve its goal to provide the time and support that will assist artists in developing their art making post-residency.

**Criteria**

The criteria specified that the residency was open to applicants “of Pacific Island heritage, resident outside of New Zealand, living in the Pacific; a contemporary visual artist who is committed to a career as a professional artist; [and] an artist who has executed sufficient work to indicate that they are possessed of sufficient talent.” (Tautai Contemporary Pacific Arts Trust 2008a, 3) Applications required a written statement, examples of recent work, and at least two references. Tautai also required that applicants were aged 25 or older and “of good character and health and wellbeing.” (Tautai Contemporary Pacific Arts Trust 2008a, 3)

Tautai provided return airfares, accommodation at a hostel close to the office, a weekly stipend of $400, use of a mobile phone, and administrative support from staff.  

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117 In 2009, the weekly stipend was $350 for six weeks; in 2010 and 2011 the artist in residence received $400 a week for five weeks. Tautai provided a mobile phone but the artist in residence was responsible for calling costs.
It was expected that five weeks would allow a visiting artist sufficient time to adjust to the new environment and acquaint themselves with Auckland’s art community, institutions, and other resources, and then build creative networks that would contribute to their artistic and professional development.

The artist awarded the residency was expected to be available for media interviews and public talks, participate in events, present a verbal or written report on their experience before leaving Auckland, and acknowledge the sponsor in any promotional material and media information. There were no production-based requirements, rather the artist in residence was expected to network and engage with Tautai’s members and the wider arts community in Auckland. (Tautai Contemporary Pacific Arts Trust 2008b; White 2008b, 6)

**Artists**

*Jeffry Feeger 2009*

Jeffry Feeger was born in his mother’s village of Kerema north of Port Moresby. When he was a child, his family moved around rural areas of Papua New Guinea while his Australian father taught high school chemistry and mathematics. As an adult, Feeger has lived in Port Moresby. In 2002, he was awarded a scholarship to study Visual Arts at the University of Papua New Guinea but remained less than a year because he preferred working independently. In 2003, he began painting professionally at the age of nineteen. He earned a living by selling paintings, illustrating books, and undertaking occasional graphic designing. (Feeger 2009a) Feeger’s preferred format of painting is portraiture. *Melanesian Beauty* (2003) (fig. 6.1), a typical example of his early work, depicts a nude woman whose face is obscured by the dark shadows that contrast the red sheen against her skin. Feeger’s use of red signifies a realisation of sexuality touched with tenderness and excitement. The hibiscus in her hair symbolises fertility and natural beauty. Although sexually overt, there is also an element of apprehension expressed through a timid pose in which her shoulder lifts towards her face.

In 2004, Feeger began to refine his realist technique. This stylistic change coincided with his move to Bougainville, an island province east of Papua New Guinea mainland, to live with his wife’s family. From 2004 through 2007, Feeger lived in Bougainville and worked in digital graphic design, sign writing, illustrating, and writing. He maintained his practice by sketching people he saw at the markets and occasionally painting portraits. (Feeger 2009a)
A New Bougainville (2006) (fig. 6.2) shows Feeger’s style of photo-realism. He was commissioned to paint “the face of Bougainville” by a private patron. To understand the significance of a “new Bougainville” it is important to understand the province’s historic and political situation. Pacific historian Ron Crocombe wrote, Bougainville is “[g]eographically part of the Solomon Islands, it was attached to German New Guinea for administrative convenience in a deal between Britain and Germany.” (Crocombe 2001, 443) There was widespread support for the resource-rich province’s independence from the 1950s on, but autonomy was not attained until 2005, after violent conflict from 1988 until 1998 in which an estimated 20,000 people died. (Crocombe 2001, 572-4; Lal and Fortune 2000, 261-263) In May 2005, Joseph Kabui was elected President of Autonomous Bougainville Government. Feeger was living there during the historic event and portraits of Bougainvillean were his primary focus from 2004 until 2010. In A New Bougainville, Feeger painted a young girl as a metaphor for Bougainville; her youth is symbolic of hope for resolution and renewal in the newly autonomous region. The girl’s dark skin is characteristic of Bougainvillean who typically have a darker complexion than those from mainland Papua New Guinean. She stands in the marketplace where the bright surroundings reflect off her skin. Feeger described his realist style as “‘Magic Realism’… where photo-realism meets surrealism; it is in between the real world and the world of the spirit.” (Feeger 2009a) Through this style, Feeger depicted everyday life in Bougainville and Papua New Guinea, in which he perceived spirits and people living side-by-side. (Feeger 2009a) The blurred background suggests the presence of spirits or guardians, and the reflection of those colours onto her skin was a means of imbuing the girl with a spiritual essence. Her folded hands gently hold flowers to signify a peace offering while the slightly timid look on her face alludes to memories of civil unrest; but Feeger’s objective was to depict “a beautiful hope in her eyes” representative of renewal in Bougainville. (Feeger 2009b) A New Bougainville demonstrates Feeger’s technical competence in composition, application of paint, and use of colour. The realistic rendering of the girl demonstrates notable technical advancement from Melanesian Beauty (fig. 6.1), not only through technical differences but the difference in expression and emotion in the later painting. Moreover, he employed a more complex palette to create subtle transitions, which reflected and indicated the environment around his subject. The title provided context for the implicit meaning of hope and renewal that a person familiar with current events in Papua New Guinea would immediately identify. This portrait is also characteristic of the works Feeger showed to those he met during the residency.
When he returned to Port Moresby from Bougainville in 2008, Feeger began looking for professional development opportunities and a teacher from his year at arts school, Daniel Waswas, encouraged him to apply for the Tautai residency. Feeger had been to Australia but had never travelled outside of Papua New Guinea for his art career. He explained that he did not know what to expect from the residency but Waswas gave him advice and contact details for artists that Waswas knew from attending art school in Auckland. (Feeger 2009a) The residency did not require a specific plan, but Feeger knew that he wanted to make professional contacts and his primary objective was to secure gallery representation in Auckland.

While in Auckland, Feeger gave numerous interviews to radio, television, and print outlets in New Zealand and Australia. (Artist Spotlight: A short Q & A with Jeffry Feeger 2010; Feeger 2009a; Paligaru 2009) He visited Tautai’s office daily where he met many of Tautai’s member artists, and Jeffery organised for Feeger to meet artists, gallerists, and other arts professionals in Auckland. Within the six weeks, Feeger achieved his objective and was offered representation by two galleries; he chose Whitespace Contemporary Art, at which time Whitespace scheduled a solo exhibition for him in March 2010.

Feeger had mixed feelings about the fact that he did not have a studio even though the residency was clearly described as “an opportunity to meet and interact with [Tautai’s] local artist community,” (Tautai Contemporary Pacific Arts Trust 2008a, 1) He remarked, “I would have loved to have a studio, but I understand that the residency was not intended to be that. But the creative energies that I felt being here drove me to create work.” (Feeger 2009a) Throughout the residency, Feeger sketched at his lodging but in the final week, he asked Jeffery to help him gain access to studio space and she arranged for him to work in a studio at Art Station, the building where Tautai’s office is based. Feeger produced a series of five charcoal and pencil drawings. The self-portraits entitled Looking Within (2009) (fig. 6.3) successfully relayed the creative energy and inspiration he felt during the residency. He wanted to have a tangible product from the residency that, in his words, “could capture my stay on a visual level as an [artist] rather than in words only.” (Feeger 2009a) The drawing was expressive and powerfully communicated the impact of the experience on the artist: pensive reflection but in a positive and empowering way. Rather than the carefully calculated Bougainville portraits, he drew from the energy around him to create deeply personal art works. Looking Within (fig. 6.3)
demonstrates that although the residency did not require production, it did not prohibit it.

Due to the White’s association with Tautai, Whitespace hosted an event for Feeger, in association with Pacific Cooperation Foundation during the final week of his residency. By that time, he had already met many of Tautai’s members but the event enabled Pacific Cooperation Foundation to invite its networks to meet Feeger, and Whitespace was able to introduce the newest artist to join the gallery. This is an example of his successful professional networking; he gave a presentation to approximately fifty people about his paintings during a slideshow of his ‘Magic realism’ paintings and spoke about the residency experience. He exhibited the Looking Within series at the event.

Feeger’s efforts to produce works were likely related to his desire to have work for sale at the function as well as providing stock for Whitespace.

During the residency, Feeger focused on defining his goals as an artist. He explained that in Port Moresby, artists were often caught up with immediate concerns of urban living like earning an income to put food on the table for their families, but the residency gave him the time and financial support to envision his career path and align his priorities to promote the development of contemporary art in Papua New Guinea. On his final day in Auckland, he said,

I would like to see an understanding from Papua New Guinea government… Contemporary art is not really given the recognition nor the understanding that it deserves and requires to flourish. (Feeger 2009a)

Feeger’s comments affirm that support for contemporary visual artists in Papua New Guinea has not recuperated to the levels it achieved in the 1970s. However, Feeger did not wait for governmental support. Instead, he acted upon his ideas when he returned to Port Moresby. He shared his experience and used his creative energy to support his peers by arranging Opim Eye, an exhibition of four Papua New Guinean painters, including Feeger, in Port Moresby in May 2009. Other opportunities that were direct outcomes from the residency include: managing Papua New Guinea’s booth at the Shanghai World Expo where he won the 2010 Shanghai Artists Battle,118 exhibitions in Port Moresby, Campbelltown (New South Wales), and Auckland; moreover, he earned the most sales and highest prices of his career. (Feeger 2010a)

The portraits Feeger produced in Port Moresby after the residency were similar to those in the Bougainville series, with a focus on realism, as seen in Secret Garden (2010)

118 The 2010 Shanghai Artists Battle was a live painting competition that was part of the 2010 World Expo Shanghai.
It was in Shanghai that his paintings transformed. He continued painting portraits in acrylic but, similar to the change in *Looking Within* (fig. 6.3), the excitement of the World Expo, the participants, crowds, and pace of painting to music in front of an audience influenced technique and style. *Angolan Woman* (fig. 6.5) (2010) is an example of the portraits he produced with thick application of multiple layers of paint and energetic brush strokes. The result is quite different from the precise application of paint in *A New Bougainville* (fig. 6.2). Upon his return to Port Moresby, Feeger seems to have continued developing both styles, using ‘Magic realism’ to communicate layered meanings and the ‘live painting’ style for portraits of straightforward titles of the sitters name, location, or occupation. These examples of professional development opportunities and the ensuing artistic shifts are evidence that the residency was very successful for Feeger.

**Jordan Souza 2010**

Jordan Souza, the 2010 Tautai artist in residence, is a multi-media artist who works in sculpture and tattoo. Souza was born on the island of O‘ahu in Hawai‘i. His heritage is characteristic of O‘ahu’s diversity, his mother is Kanaka Maoli and Chinese and his father is haole (Hawaiian term for Caucasian American). Souza completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa (2007) and, at the time of applying for the residency, was enrolled in graduate study at the Centre for Pacific Island Studies at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, researching tattoo in Oceania. (Souza 2010b)

Hawaiian culture was the inspiration for his art. The sculptures he produced at university were “based in Hawaiian ideas, Hawaiian thoughts, forms, [and] sculptural forms.” (Souza 2010b) Souza’s Hawaiian themed sculptures were typically carved from wood, which would have otherwise been discarded, and incorporated other materials such as sennit or shells, as seen in *Lawaia* (2008) (fig. 6.6). (Souza 2010a) He felt that the combination of Hawaiian themes and contemporary methods allowed him to create “art [that] is speaking to the Hawaiian community.” (Souza 2010b) When asked if the Hawaiian community meant Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiian), Souza replied, “Native Hawaiian and just local people who have grown up multi-generation there, who have a strong tie… I think anyone just growing up in Hawai‘i, you’re influenced by the lifestyle… people will pick up if you are from Hawai‘i, even if you’re not Hawaiian.” (Souza 2010b) The iconic hook in *Lawaia* referenced Hawaiian mythology of ancient...
fishermen that would be familiar not just to Hawaiians but those local people Souza referred to that have strong ties to Hawai‘i.

Souza incorporated ancient symbols and concepts into his contemporary practice, for example *Paradise Lost 2* (2007) (fig. 6.7) includes effigies of Hawai‘i’s now-extinct ‘ō‘ō and mamo birds. Souza signified the ‘ō‘ō and mamo with yellow and red feathers that were highly-valued and used for capes for high chiefs and nobility, as seen in Kalani'opu'u’s ʻahu ʻula cloak (fig. 6.8). Through this sculpture, Souza referred to the loss of the birds as well as the cultural and ceremonial products associated with them. Although *Paradise Lost 2* was made with modern materials and techniques, the sculpture honours the customary and cultural significance of the birds. The title is a sentimental reminder of the loss of important cultural products. His sculpture emulates customary carving styles and themes. By focusing on popular Hawaiian subject matter, his work appealed to locals as well as tourists that wanted art works that referenced or symbolised Hawaiian culture.

Following undergraduate studies, Souza began an apprenticeship with tattooist, photographer, and anthropologist Tricia Allen. Allen has written several books about tattoo in Oceania. (Allen 1989, 1991, 1992, 2006, 2010) Souza described how his interest in tattoo linked with his aspirations and success as a visual artist, “now that I have tattooing to help supplement my income, I’ve felt that my [art] work can really become what I wanted it to be and not just a business venture that I’m trying to survive on.” (Souza 2010b) Income from tattooing allowed Souza to challenge himself to experiment more with his sculpture because, he said, “I feel that [my work was] very commercial.” (Souza 2010b)

He applied for the Tautai residency because “I wanted to see what was going on in New Zealand… New Zealand is built up to be this Mecca of contemporary Pacific art and a lot of artists are actually making it and sustaining themselves as artists. And I wanted to do the residency just to see what it was all about.” (Souza 2010b) Souza’s objective for the five-week residency in Auckland was to discover Auckland’s art scene and meet artists, in his words, “just hearing it from them straight, not in a gallery setting.” (Souza 2010b)

Souza approached the residency differently from Feeger, and did not visit the Tautai office as often. After Jeffery initially introduced him to several of Tautai’s members, Souza contacted artists independently. Jeffery suggested artists and arts professionals around Auckland for him to meet and made a point of suggesting gallery
openings and art events for him to attend, because one condition of the residency was for visiting artists to “engage with the Tautai community of artists and supporters.” (Tautai Contemporary Pacific Arts Trust 2008a, 3) Although the expectation was clearly stated in the residency application, Souza met Jeffery’s requests to attend events with reluctance and went on to criticise that aspect of the residency. (Souza 2010b) Yet in the same interview he suggested that the residency should be more structured.119 These comments are indicative of Souza’s inconsistent assessment of his experience which has made it difficult establish a balanced evaluation of his residency experience.

Souza was inspired to create art during his residency. (Souza 2010b) It was logistically and practically difficult to make sculptures, so, like Feeger, he made works on paper. However, unlike Feeger, there was not a public event to show his work. What really flourished was his tattooing. Although Souza arranged his studio space independently, it further demonstrates that Tautai’s residency does not preclude artistic production; indeed Tautai was willing to comply with Souza’s creative needs. Tattoo became the focus of Souza’s residency and he spent several weeks tattooing in exchange for *kōpa* (Māori for gift) at Mana Moko tattoo studio in Auckland where the majority of tattoo artists were Māori. He also gave tattoos to many of Tautai’s members that he developed friendships with during the residency; for example he tattooed Nia Val Ngaro’s shoulder and arm with traditional Hawaiian tattoo motifs (figs. 6.9 and 6.10). By working at Mana Moko and tattooing in friends’ homes, Souza developed his techniques and new approaches based on styles he learned about during his stay as well as relationships with other tattoo artists. (Souza 2010b)

By the end of his stay in New Zealand, he was anxious to carve. He said, “there’s so much I want to do, I’m ready to lock myself in my studio.” (Souza 2010b) Souza anticipated substantial changes in his work as a result of exposure in New Zealand, particularly in his sculptural practice:

“I’m going to step away from more traditional practices. But the act of doing it, incorporate it into a contemporary way, like, not necessarily, carved wood, but carve some other material. I’m really anxious to start playing with casting plastics and things like that… Incorporate basically techniques, practices, beliefs, storyboards, ideas but using a lot more modern materials. (Souza 2010b)

He wanted to maintain connections with and honour customary practices without being bound to the media associated with those practices. Souza’s description of how he

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119 Souza said, “There were obligations to shows and people I should meet and lots of times transportation was not always offered, it was kind of expected of me to be places.” He went onto say, “I felt like there was so little support from the people taking care of me.” (Souza 2010b)
expected his art would evolve was influenced by viewing art and speaking to artists in Auckland about innovative materials, the relationship and distinction between culture and adaptation, and modernity. This new-found appreciation for finding balance between custom and contemporary materials was also a consequence of how he utilised the residency. Unlike Feeger’s professional development strategy, Souza’s was more personal and exploratory artistic development; he met and developed relationships with artists that he could relate to, and engaged in stimulating debates about contemporary Pacific/Oceanic art. Souza noted that a highlight of the residency was meeting artists that challenged his methods, practice, and ideas. He said, “I think one thing I’m learning from all the Māori and contemporary New Zealand artists is to make it a little further in the art world… the art work has to speak a little more universally. But at the same time I am meeting a lot of New Zealand artists that don’t feel that way, they feel like I need to represent [Native Hawaiians] and [the art is] for my people.” (Souza 2010b) These remarks indicate how he listened to the different ideas offered by the artists he met and then stored them to reflect upon when he returned home. His appreciation of the intellectual artistic and cultural exchange was also indicative of differences between the art communities in Auckland and Honolulu: Auckland hosts a vibrant Pacific arts community whereas Honolulu’s indigenous arts community does not have an equivalent profile, publicity, or enthusiasm. Kanaka Maoli artist Carl Pao related these issues to Honolulu’s audience that is “uneducated about the culture around them in Oceania.” (Pao 2010)

After the residency, Souza travelled to Wellington to spend a week with Michel Tuffery, whom he had met when Tuffery was an artist in residence at the University of Hawai‘i in 2009.120 Afterwards, Souza returned to Auckland to spend an additional two weeks tattooing at Mana Moko and stayed with friends he had met during the residency. He did not leave with confirmation of exhibitions or commitments from dealer galleries, but those were not Souza’s goals. Instead, he left Auckland with strong relationships with peers in New Zealand and motivation to transform his sculptural practice “to allow a lot more Pacific interpretation and not just interpretation from my community.” (Souza 2010b) As of May 2011, Souza has not had a gallery exhibition of new works since the residency and so it is difficult to evaluate how the comments and advice from artists in New Zealand has influenced his practice.

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120 Tuffery’s residency was sponsored by the Center for Pacific Islands Studies and Art Department.
**Social and economic development**

In previous case studies, the theme of development has been considered within the host’s community. Since Tautai’s goal was to provide a professional development opportunity for artists, I evaluate the social and economic development associated with the individual artist’s experience. Social development manifested as artistic networks, which both Feeger and Souza achieved, although in very different ways. Feeger has remained in close contact with Tautai, a number of its members, and the arts professionals and organisations in Auckland through social networking, email correspondence, and visits in 2010 and 2011. Although I have not had a response from Souza himself, Auckland-based artists John Ioane and Jim Vivieaere confirmed that Souza has maintained contact with the artists he met during the residency. (Ioane 2010; Vivieaere 2011) Economic development, in Feeger’s case, emerged through opportunities generated as a result of the Tautai residency.121

On the final day of his residency, Feeger said that he felt that he made enormous progress with professional development and strengthened networks that he intended to extend to and maintain in Port Moresby.

> It gives me the opportunity to expose my work [to] a larger market, so that is quite important… As an artist, just seeing the work that is being produced here [in Auckland], just seeing what the Pacific artists that are living here are doing is an eye opener. And … inspires me to be trying to achieve something, perhaps, on par with the artists here. So when I go back home there will be a lot to think about. (Feeger 2009a)

While Souza offered similar remarks about artistic innovation in New Zealand, Feeger was referencing artistic achievements as well as the economic opportunities associated with successful exhibitions. Feeger recognised that he could use the experience of what he was exposed to in Auckland to encourage, motivate, and support his peers in Port Moresby. (Feeger 2009a) This aligned with Tautai’s goal for the residency to provide practical support for artists based in the islands. (Jeffery 2010b) To achieve such a goal, Tautai was heavily dependent on selecting the right artist to disseminate their new-found knowledge and experience in their home community.

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121 It was not possible to evaluate how the residency affected Souza economically because he did not respond to my requests for information and there are no records of his involvement in exhibitions after the residency.
Feeger felt that because he was awarded the residency, it was his responsibility to support others, similar to the way that Daniel Waswas had encouraged him. Feeger’s desire for an overseas career was also inextricably linked with his desire to promote Papua New Guinean art. His view was that the residency was not simply his personal achievement but an opportunity to support Papua New Guinean artists collectively. Although the idea of thinking of Papua New Guinean art collectively may seem idealistic and/or simplistic, my point relates to the way that the Tautai residency was indeed able to reach a range of artists in Port Moresby. One way that Feeger was able to share and deliver his experience to his peers was by arranging an exhibition soon after he returned home. While in Auckland, he decided he would organise an exhibition of art responding to current social issues with three of his peers in Port Moresby, Gazellah Bruder, Mairi Feeger (his brother), and Laben Sakale John. Feeger explained that the grouping of artists and the opportunity was only something he could see from a distance: “It was like stepping out was an opportunity to look back and see things differently.” (Feeger 2010a) 

*Opim Eye* was opened in Port Moresby in May. In the exhibition catalogue, Feeger described what he gained from the residency, “Amongst many things I’ve taken back, the most important is an increased sense of self worth and worth of my fellow [Papua New Guinean] contemporary artists and what we represent in this world. This exhibition, I believe is a testament to the talent and diversity of our new contemporary artists.” (Opim Eye 2009, 1) Feeger referred to the group as “new contemporary artists” to differentiate them from the first artists to hold residencies in Port Moresby: Akis, Kauage, Jakupa, and Morububuna (Chapter II). This is one example of how he combined personal achievement with supporting his colleagues in Port Moresby.

He also included work in three other exhibitions in Port Moresby and one international show in 2009. A review of his exhibition history confirms that from 2001 to 2008 he exhibited in one or two shows each year until 2009 when his work was included in six exhibitions and seven in 2010. Reflecting on the exponential increase of exhibition opportunities in Port Moresby and internationally, Feeger remarked: “[the residency] really launched my career out of the country.” (Feeger 2010a) Possibly his biggest triumph was an invitation to represent Papua New Guinea at the 2010 World Expo Shanghai, as consultant and secretariat for his country’s booth. (Feeger 2010a) In Shanghai, Feeger’s enthusiasm and networking experience from his time in Auckland continued to propel his career beyond anything he could have imagined just a few years before. He wrote from the World Expo:
I have made many valuable contacts in Shanghai. My artistic talent has been very well received here by people from all over the world. I have made very profound contacts with [A]frican countries, especially with the people of Angola Pavilion. (Feeger 2010a)

He also referred to a live painting performance to the music of South African DJ Versit@ile, an activity he was introduced to in Shanghai. Feeger participated in several live painting performances during the Expo and, as previously noted, went on to win the 2010 Shanghai Artists Battle. The practice of live painting influenced his approach and resulting style of work, evident in works like *Angolan Woman* (2010) (fig. 6.4). Just as he shared the inspiration and motivation he gained during the Tautai residency by organising an exhibition with his peers in Port Moresby, he hopes to bring live painting to Papua New Guinea to inspire contemporary artists. He wrote, “I will bring home… this new type of artistic performance... Something I hope [Papua New Guinea] is ready for.” (Feeger 2010a)

Feeger’s achievements since the Tautai residency were not the result of a single opportunity. As I have suggested in other case studies, a residency experience is not entirely the source of success, whether personally, professionally, or economically. Rather, the residency can trigger or contribute to a series of events as it did for Feeger. His resultant successes exemplify how a residency at the right time in a career can launch it to new heights. As Feeger said at the opening of his solo exhibition at Whitespace in March 2010, “the timing [was] perfect for me, it’s unbelievably perfect… [and] lift[ed] my career ten-fold.” (Feeger 2010b) The Whitespace exhibition, like his exhibitions in Port Moresby and the solo exhibition hosted by Beyond Pacific Art in Brisbane in 2010, sold out and set new levels of pricing for Feeger’s paintings. He had been concerned that international audiences would not understand the context of his paintings but sell-out exhibitions in Brisbane and Auckland proved that there was appreciation for his portraits outside of Papua New Guinea. (Feeger 2010a)

What Tautai gained in terms of social development was the expansion of networks to Papua New Guinea and, possibly, Hawai‘i was the organisation’s goal, and the residency succeeded in creating a strong link with Feeger. As the following section explains, Souza’s residency did not necessarily strengthen Tautai’s network in Hawai‘i. Tautai did not anticipate direct economic profit from the residency, but Feeger’s subsequent success can be counted as a shared accomplishment for Tautai.
Cultural exchange

Just five days after he arrived in Auckland, Souza was excited about “the freedom to just, kind of meet people and try to absorb [the diverse range of art in Auckland].” (Souza 2010b) He said that he would never be as inspired as he was at that moment and that he felt more motivated than ever.122 (Souza 2010b) Reflecting on the first five days, Souza said he appreciated the sense of artistic and cultural exchange with his peers in Auckland because he was meeting people in a similar situation to himself, sharing a socio-economic background or the same free time pursuits. (Souza 2010b) He also felt a connection to the artists that he met because, like him, they were trying to figure out what they were doing in art and life. Another similarity that Souza did not specify but shared with many of Tautai’s member artists was multiracial heritage.123 Souza’s own Hawaiian, Chinese, and European heritage was similar to some of the artists he formed strong friendships with during the residency, such as Ema Tavola, whose father is Fijian and mother is a New Zealander, or Jim Vivieaere’s Cook Islands, Tahitian, and Chinese heritage.

Souza also said that he was extremely impressed with how easily he accessed “top artists… taking me into their house, showing them my work, them showing me their work, and just hearing it from them straight, not in a gallery setting. Like what it takes, what it took for them to get where they are.” (Souza 2010b) Those immediate reactions from Souza were bolstered by rapt comments about how the residency provided him with time and resources to engage with artists he revered such as Jim Vivieaere and John Ioane. (Souza 2010b) These comments at the beginning of the residency made it evident that social interactions would play a prominent part in Souza’s residency. The friendliness and generosity of Tautai’s artist community suggests that they were also enthusiastic about the residency and appreciated the opportunity to welcome and connect with Pacific artists from outside New Zealand.

Over the course of the residency, Souza became increasingly concerned with issues around cultural identity for Pacific peoples. Referring to its complexities he said: “You get here and you realise the complexities of, like the relationships between people and communities and neighbourhoods. I mean it’s just amazing, and it’s just so complicated.” (Souza 2010b) As part of his graduate studies, Souza had researched

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122 Souza’s exact words were: “I would never just be inspired as I am now. I’d never come here. I mean, I’m more motivated than ever.” (Souza 2010b)

123 New Zealand’s diverse population means that individuals often have, for instance, Samoan and European heritage or Tongan and Chinese or Fijian and Māori, amongst many other combinations.
cultural identity in New Zealand. Being in New Zealand, he realised that issues were more complicated than an essay or book could ever describe. I found his reaction surprising because Hawai‘i’s population of indigenous and non-indigenous residents have very complex relationships between different ethnic communities. Admittedly, it is sometimes easier to identify such complexities when one is an outsider. He felt a strong connection with many of the artists of Pacific heritage and Māori artists with whom he had productive cultural and artistic exchanges. However, the positive cultural exchange did not extend to Tautai’s management.

During a post-residency interview, Souza raised the issue of ethnicity regarding Tautai’s position as the host of a residency for Pacific artists, specifically about having Christina Jeffery, a European or Pakeha New Zealander, as Tautai’s manager and point-person for the residency. In his own words, “I’m pretty worldly, I’ve travelled… but… I could really see some of like people where I’m from having a really [big] culture shock, being very offended, and like, you know, it’s just not a person you can relate to. These people who are white-skinned are usually mean to us where we’re from.” (Souza 2010b) This is an issue that requires attention because his comment alludes to issues of indigeneity, colonial legacy, and the place of heritage in the cultural exchanges through residencies. Souza has not been the first person to question Tautai for having a person without Pacific heritage as manager, but I interpret his reaction as possibly a result of some of the relationships he developed during the residency more than a result of his relationship with Jeffery. Unlike Feeger who visited Tautai’s office daily and relied on Jeffery to make his appointments, Souza’s visits were less frequent and his networking was more independent. I did not ask Jeffery to respond to Souza’s comments but, having researched the trust’s history and been involved with Tautai, I perceive that Jeffery has extensive support from Tautai’s artist community. She has been a supporter of the trust since its inception in the late 1980s and was Communications Manager and filled in as Acting Manager as necessary from 2004 until 2007, when she was officially hired as Manager. She initiated Tautai’s residency and has been instrumental in securing Creative New Zealand funding.125 Souza’s comment raises the question: is ethnicity more important than skill for the manager of a Pacific arts organisation? I expect that Tautai’s

124 Souza’s actual statement was not clearly verbalised but I feel it is important to quote him rather than simply summarise his sentiments. Having spent two years in Hawai‘i, I feel that many Native Hawaiians would take issue with these comments. I find Souza’s statement essentialist and problematic in that it perpetuates racism because he is not judging the manager on ability but ethnicity.
125 In 2010, Creative New Zealand merged its three art boards into a single entity. As a result, Tautai was required to reapply for recurrent funding to ensure that Tautai’s goals aligned with Creative New Zealand’s strategic priorities.
Board of Trustees hired Jeffery because of her skills and commitment to Pacific arts in New Zealand rather than not hiring her because of heritage.

Yet Souza raised an important issue about cultural exchange and indigeneity. The residencies presented throughout this research are all based in Oceania and many required artists with Pacific heritage, as does Tautai, both for membership and the residency. When culture is such an important factor in the residency, does this mean that people without Pacific heritage should not be involved? This important issue needs to be considered by sponsors as they propose and plan residencies. Each residency should be evaluated for the quality of opportunities it provides artists, rather than other criteria. There are numerous Europeans involved in the management of residencies throughout Oceania and no other artist interviewed in the course of my research criticised a host on the basis of ethnicity. Rather, I note that artists like New Zealand-born Cook Islander Veronica Vaevae and Cook Islander Michael Tavioni felt that basing awards on heritage was not necessarily in the best interest of the artists and communities that might be better served by awards based on skill. (Tavioni 2009; Vaevae 2010)

When initially introducing himself, Souza explained that his father is *haole* (Caucasian/ European-American) and his mother is of Chinese and Kanaka Maoli descent and went on to explain that “Hawaiian themes in art isn’t something that should necessarily be reserved for just Native Hawaiians.” (Souza 2010b) Therefore, it may be more a reflection of personal differences than principle, and a reflection of some of the relationships he formed outside of Tautai. Still, Souza’s criticism suggests that the attitudes he brought with him to New Zealand had been modified by his experience. Souza fell into a ‘us against them’ mentality which was unfortunate as ‘them’ ended up being Tautai’s management (not artists), probably instigated when Souza drifted away from his hosts and resented commitments requested by them with Tautai members and supporters. Although, Souza’s remarks during interviews were often inconsistent and contradictory, the issue is significant in regards to opportunities for indigenous artists.

Commenting on both Feeger’s and Souza’s residencies, Jeffery remarked that she felt cultural exchange amongst Pacific artists is what the residency does best:

We all learned a lot about Papua New Guinea, and we’ve all just learned a lot more about Hawai‘i and the situation there… not just the art, the politics of indigenous rights… [The artists in Auckland asked] questions about everyday life as well as making art and the whole art business but just about life and death wherever they come from. So I think that exchange is certainly [a part of the residency], certainly our artists have learned. I hope they [Feeger and Souza] learned about different cultures as well as about the art scene. They both arrived
Jeffery’s comments indicate the more positive side of the residency’s cultural exchange. However, the exchange does not appear as pronounced as that in, for instance, the Creative New Zealand Cook Islands residency in which some of the New Zealand-born Cook Islander artists were inspired by and connected to genealogy and heritage. Marlaina Key, one of Tautai’s member artists and a part-time employee at Tautai, got to know the artists in residence well and offered her opinion about what the residency offers: “It’s a reminder to [Tautai members] to see how lucky we are… to have the opportunities, whether it’s to study… It’s kind of like that reminder, and it’s almost like a touchstone, especially for the ones who are New Zealand-born to say, ‘I actually have an amazing opportunity where I am’… I think [the benefits to Tautai’s artists are] still growing, I think for the ones who engage with the artist, [the exchange] resounds…” (Key 2011)

Key noted the determining factor for benefiting Tautai’s artists: they must show initiative and get involved with the visiting artist. She also noted that some New Zealand-based artists are not able to travel to other parts of the region and so for them, getting to know visiting artists in residence, does indeed give them a sense of life in the islands. For Tautai, then, it seems enough for the residency to primarily benefit artists in the islands with a secondary focus on Tautai’s members because, as Jeffery noted, it was envisioned as a means to connect island-based artists with those in New Zealand through the residency, which was an asset for fostering artistic and cultural exchange.

**Chapter Summary**

By providing the gift of time for Pacific artists outside of New Zealand, Tautai’s residency has offered valuable opportunities for artists to increase professional networks, access resources, and connect with artists and other professionals. The residency reveals a different model that is producing significant results, particularly evident through Feeger’s success in late 2009 and 2010. Tautai’s residency demonstrates different levels of engagement by inviting artists from outside New Zealand and providing opportunities that can take their careers to another level: a more developed marketplace. The residency was not production-based, instead art making was up to the individual artist. Although this residency broke away from a typical understanding of a residency as an opportunity to focus attention on art making, it did not preclude art production and provided artists with freedom to decide how to use their time. Moreover, it compelled the artists to step
away from consistent production to possibly take a subjective view of their career and future.

Tautai’s residency has contributed to artists’ artistic innovation and growth through professional development and networking. Although knowing the residency was not suited to accommodate their creative needs, the artists found themselves in an unexpected situation in which both Feeger and Souza urgently wanted to create. Though limited in resources, studio space, and time, both coped by working on smaller projects, Souza through tattooing and Feeger through sketches. In essence, once the residency was finished they were expected to return home at a point when they would be able satisfy their creative desire on larger pieces such as sculpture and canvases, hence continuing their residency experiences and ideas. This sharing of knowledge further reflects how residencies can carry artistic growth, innovation, and visual information and experiences from society to society.

This is a unique example amongst Oceanic residencies and, although the recipients had different experiences, they highlighted how individuals are responsible for the success of their residency. Feeger was conscious of how his experience could benefit the arts community in Port Moresby and continually aware of his role to be representative of Papua New Guinean art and artists placed upon him by his mentor Daniel Waswas. He also had a clear goal of expanding his audience base, which he achieved by securing a dealer. Souza’s experience, on the other hand, focused on a cultural dialogue that, he anticipated, would result in new directions in his artistic practice. He also took advantage of the opportunity to learn from and work with Māori tattoo artists in a reciprocal exchange, where the Māori artists and those he tattooed were able to learn about Hawaiian tattoo styles and customs.

Tautai’s residency is a recent endeavour and, as an organisation, was not building on previous experience like Creative New Zealand, but the results thus far suggest that this alternative residency model is successful. The residency is scheduled to continue and it will be interesting to see if, in time, the programme changes to further involve members of Tautai’s constituency and respond to their suggestions, as well as those made by the artists in residence. Although Souza suggested there was insufficient support from Tautai’s staff, I met with Tautai’s staff on several occasions and I met each of the three artists in residence at least twice during their residency and Feeger and Palmer actually said the opposite, that there was enormous support from Tautai’s staff and the organisation’s network of members and supporters. All three of the artists in residence
are now part of a network of artists, although Souza’s involvement is through friends and peers rather than Tautai, their involvement will continue to offer opportunities for dialogue, exchange, and even exhibition and collaboration. Support does not end on the final day of the residency, rather a reciprocal relationship continues to develop and extend the networks of and for artists.
CHAPTER VII: FORMAT AND FUNCTION – AN OVERVIEW

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview and draws conclusions about how the format of residencies affected the way they functioned in Oceania, drawing comparatively on the case studies. I discuss the strengths and weaknesses of long-term and short-term residencies, paying attention to why a particular format worked for the sponsor and how artists and communities were affected. Although the terms long-term and short-term are my device for differentiation and not standard residency jargon, nor the only distinctions between the individual residencies, they serve as an effective launching point to evaluate the residencies included in the case studies. Assessment of long-term and short-term residencies leads to examination of the role of residencies in regards to institutions such as universities and local communities. I then turn to the artists and their art by considering the implications of the criterion of heritage for indigenous artists and whether it has meant that these residencies necessitate production of ‘native’ styles. Finally, I conclude by asking: why are residencies important for artists in Oceania?

Throughout this overview, I once again refer to issues related to the paradigms of sponsorship, artistic innovation and growth, cultural exchange, and social and economic development that have been employed throughout the thesis, while also highlighting practical issues related to the function of residencies. This is not a comprehensive summary of the case studies, but draws from the information already compiled to compare and contrast the residencies. It is not possible, or desirable, to rank them because the experience of a six-year residency at the Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture (Chapter III), for example, was quite different to a three-month residency in the Cook Islands (Chapter IV). Overall, this chapter consolidates my findings on the ways that residencies have been supporting the growth of contemporary visual arts in Oceania from 1969 to 2010.

Residency redefined

The implicit meaning of the term ‘residency’ was a critical factor in gaining recognition for artists involved with the programmes included throughout this thesis, but particularly in Papua New Guinea (Chapter II) and Fiji (Chapter III). The terminology did not necessarily denote the same format and function it would elsewhere in the world;
two or three months is often considered a long residency elsewhere. From the examples provided through the case studies, it emerges that there have been three predominant ways that residencies have been adapted and defined to suit perceived local needs – workshop style or informal long-term residencies, conventional short-term residencies, and a non-production based residency that provides the “gift of time” for professional development. The shifting definitions of residencies have also influenced the way that these programmes have functioned in Oceania. By redefining the term, new and unique models of residencies emerged.

In the late 1960s, Europeans Georgina and Ulli Beier imported the terminology ‘residency’ to Papua New Guinea and employed it to credit emerging artists’ skills and contributions. The term was intended as an alternative to the institutional framework of Western education and terminology like diploma or curriculum. Although the term was adopted, the typical European format of a residency was not. Instead, Beier established a workshop environment for creative individuals to have the space and resources to develop their artistic practice, which assisted artists to launch a career and sell art works. Conceivably, Beier was transforming the informal workshop model from Nigeria to a residency model in Papua New Guinea and bestowing a professional designation on the activities that took place in the informal setting of her home. The workshop-style format avoided the constraints of academic training as well as cultural conventions followed in the villages where individualistic practices like contemporary visual arts careers conflicted with the typical communal lifestyle. Not only was the terminology imported but the methodology of encouraging artists to depict original art forms from their imaginations was new to many of the first artists in residence. In Chapter II, I argued that Beier’s model was in fact part of a colonial legacy although she advocated that the residency format corresponded with priorities for a self-governing Papua New Guinea. While Beier’s residencies were effective for fostering artists, the control that she and Ulli Beier exerted over the artists meant that the programme was not necessarily encouraging self-determination for contemporary visual artists.

Scottish educator Tom Craig also made use of the term in a format that responded to desires to increase local arts infrastructure and capacity. Residencies at the

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126 For example, the renowned MacDowell Colony in Peterborough, New Hampshire considers two months a long residency and a short residency is two or three weeks. (The MacDowell Colony 2011)
127 I refer to this conventional, Euro-American, or international style of residency as European throughout this chapter because it was first introduced by Europeans. Moreover, it is thought that the concept of artist residencies originated in Europe. (Joly 1996; Trans Artists)
Creative Arts Centre (1972-1976) and then the National Arts School (1976-1990) in Papua New Guinea also employed a format akin to a workshop or shared studio, again with an absence of a fixed duration. The residencies functioned to serve local needs of artists, like Timothy Akis and Jakupa Ako, until institutional changes terminated residency options and degree programmes were the only opportunities for artists to access the university’s facilities. Although the term ‘residency’ was employed by Craig, the programmes themselves hardly resembled the originating European version, which established a standard. It was not necessary for a residency to follow a prescribed model. The first residencies at the University of the South Pacific (USP) established by Albert Wendt corroborates the need for a single or standardised model because, although he was familiar with Beier’s and Craig’s initiatives and had been to Papua New Guinea, Wendt adopted a more conventional model with a fixed period of time in which the artist could focus on artistic production. Consistency remained in the term – residency – that conveyed professionalism and status through the sponsor’s or host’s endorsement.

Although USP’s residencies in the 1970s were not modelled after those in Papua New Guinea, those at the Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture were based on the format developed by Beier and Craig. Epeli Hau'ofa was inspired by the programmes he observed in Papua New Guinea and used the term ‘residency’ at the Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture to ensure that the artists were distinguished from students, because he was fundamentally opposed to teaching arts and culture through Western institutional frameworks. Upon founding the Oceania Centre, Hau'ofa, like Craig, established a precedent for creative individuals to join as artists in residence with no predetermined duration, and the use of a shared studio or workshop environment with the expectation that participatory exchange would facilitate skills training. The difference between Hau’ofa’s adoption of the term and Beier’s was that even though it was strongly influenced by the original European facilitators, he imported it from Papua New Guinea.

Another definition of the term ‘residency’ was assigned when Creative New Zealand initiated programmes in the Cook Islands (Chapter IV) and Sāmoa (Chapter V) based on conventional international models but with an added training component resembling the workshops co-sponsored by UNESCO in the 1970s (Chapter I). Creative New Zealand had a clear definition of the term ‘residency’ based on its national and international programmes, but built upon those by incorporating requirements such as conducting workshops in order to meet its development strategies and accommodate the needs of hosts and artists’ communities in Oceania. Despite the significant differences
between the UNESCO co-sponsored workshops in the 1970s, such as the Tonga Regional Workshop (1976), and Creative New Zealand’s residencies, there is an evident link in terms of the additional training aspect incorporated into the residencies. This was unlike the organisation’s other national and international programmes, such as the Macmillan Brown Pacific Artist Residency (1996-present) or Berlin Visual Arts Residency (2000-present). The community engagement and training directive was similar to UNESCO’s, which was related to the goals of both development organisations. In this sense, Creative New Zealand’s programmes were based on an international, essentially European, model adapted to integrate a training component similar to the preceding workshops. However, while Creative New Zealand adapted their residency model for Oceania, it is not exclusive to the region; residencies in Europe, Africa, Latin America, and other areas require or encourage artists to conduct workshops. (Alliance of Artists Communities 2008a, 2008b, 2009; Joly 1996; Res Artis; Trans Artists) Within Oceania itself, the Ministry of Cultural Development in the Cook Islands adopted the Creative New Zealand model to offer to local artists. Beachcomber Contemporary Art’s residency in the Cook Islands, on the other hand, is a conventional residency model that has not been redefined. Nevertheless, the private residency model is unique in comparison to the other examples of residencies because it is the only conventional residency format based on commercial objectives and an artist/dealer relationship within the case studies.

A final definition of ‘residency’ from the case studies, at odds with the others and, effectively, a contemporary adaptation indicative of the prevalence of residencies worldwide and efforts to offer a gift of time, is Tautai Contemporary Pacific Arts Trust’s residency (Chapter VI) that does not require or necessarily facilitate art making. Although, internationally, the “gift of time” is a commonly used motto for residency programmes, artists are typically provided with the resources necessary to produce art. Tautai adopted and redefined the terminology so that artists were given the chance and resources to discover and make use of Auckland’s arts institutions and community, based on the presumption that applicants would not have such an opportunity at home. Again, this transformed the meaning of residency. While an experience-based residency may seem at-odds with developing artists’ skills, Tautai’s residency actually promoted innovations in art by encouraging artists to step away from an intensive schedule of art making. Although it will take time for evidence to emerge to support this assertion, as the former artists in residence continue their careers, the innovations will become evident.
These examples demonstrate some of the ways that residencies were defined and structured based on local conditions such as arts community, local resources and/or infrastructure for arts, political situation, and funding. These definitions have been effectively transferred and modified from one place to another in Oceania. I propose that these definitions can be a first point of deliberation for those interested in establishing residency programmes. Sponsors can begin assessing their options by defining the term residency to serve their objectives, adopting and adapting one or more models to fit their specific needs.

**Long-term or short-term residency?**

I strategically defined long-term and short-term residencies because I see the difference as key for understanding how residencies in Oceania have functioned. The Papua New Guinea and Fiji case studies suggest that long-term residencies were instituted when there was limited infrastructure for contemporary arts. Short-term residencies, on the other hand, complemented emergent arts communities, as was the case in the Cook Islands and Sāmoa. The situation of the respective growth of arts infrastructure and communities was also indicative of the historical point in time; for instance, independence in Papua New Guinea (1974) or the increase of New Zealand-born and trained artists in the Cook Islands (late 1990s).

The chronological ordering of the case studies in this thesis resulted in the long-term residencies preceding the short-term examples. This initially appeared to be happenstance particularly because the Oceania Centre residencies (1997-present) continued alongside the Creative New Zealand residencies (Cook Islands 2000-2006 and Sāmoa 2007-2010). But evaluation and comparison of the case studies indicates that the change in format was related to the development of arts infrastructure and resources, and the evolution of residencies over time. Yet it is not entirely developmental. At USP, there was a shift from short-term residencies to long-term, and the latter model continues at the Oceania Centre despite the growth of arts infrastructure in Fiji. The early residencies did not develop into a consistent programme whereas the long-term residencies instituted by Hau’ofa occurred in tandem with the growth of arts industries, locally and regionally. However, the continued development of the Oceania Centre’s programmes and the addition of academic opportunities under the direction of Vilsoni Hereniko indicates that change is imminent even if Hereniko has, for the time being, maintained
Hau'ofa’s long-term residency format. Moreover, the model is not as sustainable as degree courses and/or short-term programmes.

The other distinctive feature of the long-term residencies was a personal vision. Georgina Beier and Epeli Hau’ofa had a vision for how indigenous artists should be supported. Beier’s and Hau’ofa’s, and arguably Craig’s, vision defined the format because residencies were driven by their personal investment and objectives in addition to other factors such as their employers: educational institutions. Due to the dominance of these visions and the limited arts infrastructure in Papua New Guinea and Fiji, long-term residencies were actually prescribing arts production. For example, Beier directed artists to create non-representational art and Hau'ofa worked with untrained artists who looked to him for guidance. Although Beier and Hau'ofa endeavoured to foster freedom from institutions, they prescribed a set of rules that they deemed appropriate, that were not assessed by a wider governing body. The personal directives also resulted in the artists becoming personally invested in the ideology behind such programmes. For instance, aside from Mason Lee, the long-term artists in residence did not leave the Oceania Centre until after Hau'ofa’s death in 2009 which, I believe, was a consequence of their loyalty to him and underlying confidence in his vision.

Beachcomber Contemporary Art’s objectives for the short-term residency were based on both personal vision and commercial objectives. In the other instances, residency programmes have been part of efforts to meet strategic organisational goals set by Creative New Zealand, the Cook Islands Ministry of Cultural Development, National University of Sāmoa (NUS), and Tautai Contemporary Pacific Arts Trust. Those organisations had leaders and dedicated individuals but generally promoted institutional objectives rather than personal beliefs, with the result that they were far less prescriptive.

Short-term residencies have offered resources to artists to support the development of contemporary visual arts in Oceania while remaining within the parameters of an organisation’s financial and personnel resources. Short-term programmes offer opportunity for rotation, such as art forms and artists, as well as opportunities for sponsors to assess the artists’ and programme’s objectives and accomplishments, which can be used to transform the format and function of the residency. Through collaborative programmes, short-term residencies could find a balance between institutional directives and independent initiatives. A greater range of independent residency programmes throughout the region has the potential to prompt organisations like Creative New Zealand or the Cook Islands Ministry of Cultural
Development to provide direct funding for artists to undertake the residencies. For example, New Zealand-based Niuean artist Glenda Vilisoni applied to Creative New Zealand for financial sponsorship for an independent residency in Niue. Vilisoni spent three months in Niue in 2008 developing her artistic practice and conducting research. Although, she remarked that she did not have a host to provide logistical support, which would have helped her avoid housing issues and difficulties sourcing materials, she described the experience as formative and instrumental in encouraging her to revive her commitment to art making. (Vilisoni 2009) The independent residency also resulted in her involvement organising and participating in Niue’s first arts festival held in 2009. However, short-term residencies are not without strings attached. Beachcomber Contemporary Art’s private residency is dependent on the gallery’s commercial objectives and agreement with the artist for the art works to be sold by the gallery.

Although I support the implementation of short-term residency programmes, both formats have certain benefits and disadvantages. Beachcomber Contemporary Art’s residency is independent, however it is a business-based residency that is driven by Ben Bergman’s personal aspiration to nurture an international art scene in the Cook Islands. This type of independent programme can complement programmes in educational institutions as well as provide opportunities for those who are not involved with institutions. An advantage of the short-term programmes is that they are just one component of a dynamic career. Former Registrar of USP Walter Fraser remarked that a negative implication of long-term residencies was complacency due to the artists’ reliance on the residency as the primary component of their career. Others in the university and community shared Fraser’s perception that the Red Wave Collective’s artists became complacent due to the indeterminate duration and unstructured nature of long-term residencies. This may have also been the case in Papua New Guinea but descriptions of Jakupa’s and Akis’ careers suggest that the artists were not complacent. A significant difference between, for instance, Jakupa’s and Mason Lee’s residency at the Oceania Centre was that Jakupa received accommodation and studio space but no salary and so was dependent on exhibition sales to support his family and purchase supplies to make more work. While residents at the Oceania Centre did not earn sizeable wages, they had some income. Therefore, it was not the duration that made artists in residence compliant but the diminished pressure on artists to support themselves, which encouraged a lack of change in the artist collective. The Red Wave Collective’s members did not change dramatically whereas Jakupa and Akis were the only long-term artists in
residence throughout the transitions from the Creative Arts Centre to National Arts School and, during that time, many different students and staff came through the institutions.

The trend towards short-term residencies is indicative of the changing arts situation throughout Oceania. Globalisation, transportation, and other modern conveniences have made short-term residencies an effective and efficient means of supporting contemporary visual artists in conjunction with institutions, formal and informal, such as the Cook Islands National Museum or Beautiful Expressions of Nature in Sāmoa. Unlike the conditions surrounding long-term residencies in Papua New Guinea and at the Oceania Centre where artists with no training were introduced to contemporary visual arts, short-term residencies have occurred when arts degree programmes and professional accreditation were more accessible to artists in Oceania. Although most artist residencies have taken place in cities where an art market is centred, today they require more funding than those at Beier’s home in 1969, another justification for short-term residencies, which have limited initial financial commitment. Moreover, careers in visual arts are no longer unusual or unheard of as they were in Papua New Guinea in the late 1960s (although resources in north western Oceania/Micronesia are still scarce).

Though I have not focused on the countries in north western Oceania/Micronesia in this thesis, those island communities could implement residencies as a means for building arts infrastructure and artist communities there. However, the absence of arts infrastructure and opportunities indicates that artists would benefit from an initial programme of long-term residencies to establish arts initiatives in the communities for a set duration of, for instance, five years. After an initial investment in long-term opportunities, I believe that short-term residencies as described above would be more effective.

**Residencies, institutions, and communities**

When workshops were sponsored by UNESCO and USP and residencies were initiated by Beier and Craig, there were few art schools in Oceania. Currently there are art training options at many of the universities in Oceania, some through Education Departments, as is the case at NUS. New programmes are also being established, which affects the need for and function of residencies in Oceania. For Beier, Craig, and Hau'ofa, residencies were a means of providing opportunities where institutional
certifications for artists were not available whereas, in the later examples such as Creative New Zealand’s and the Cook Islands Ministry of Cultural Development’s residencies were opportunities for established artists, many of whom had completed an arts degree programme. In this section, I discuss the role of institutions and communities with a particular focus on examples of residencies that utilised resources to reach beyond the institution into the community, which is a practical point for consideration for those involved in residencies.

Craig and Hau'ofa each had moments when they realised that teaching according to Western benchmarks was ignoring local epistemologies, (Hau'ofa et al. 1993; Craig pers. comm. in Rosi 1994, 141-143), which became a turning point and influenced their preference of residencies over formalised courses. Over time, Craig was ultimately forced to implement degree programmes and Hau'ofa was urged to. Unlike Walter Fraser’s wish for formal training at the Oceania Centre, art collector and writer Hugh Stevenson’s criticism of the National Arts School in Papua New Guinea pointed out that diploma courses could also foster reproduction more than experimentation. Stevenson wrote: “The exhilarating, naïve and vibrant exhibitions of the early 1970s had given way to the neat, efficient student exercises in graphic technique – assessment exercises one would see in any art school end of year showing… When they exhibited there was little of the unexpected in their work.” (Simons, Stevenson, and Perc Tucker Regional Art Gallery 1990, 31) Stevenson observed that when residencies succumbed to formal training, experimentation diminished and reproduction increased. Stevenson’s comments support Hau'ofa’s decision not to move towards diploma programmes to continue to encourage experimentation. However, the artists in residence at the Oceania Centre often emulated others; for instance, Josua Toganivalu’s style that was initially based on John Pule’s paintings, which suggests that the absence of formal teaching did not prevent replication. Hau'ofa left the responsibility with the artists in residence on the assumption that self-motivation would fuel their artistic development.

Stevenson’s comments and Hau'ofa’s management approach further support the value of a range of independent short-term residency programmes which could work in tandem with institutions while also addressing and involving different communities. Artistic training, exchange, and professional development could vary according to those involved and would also establish new spaces for creativity outside of the strictures of universities. For instance, there was limited involvement outside of NUS during Vivieaere’s residency. There were clues that this might happen when the university
repeatedly requested that Creative New Zealand sponsor a Samoan artist to have a residency in New Zealand. The university did not express interest in engaging a wider public, rather their focus was supporting students and the university’s community. In Rarotonga, there was extensive involvement with the wider community because of the nature of the small island community but also because the museum, which was the host, is a public institution whereas a university is often limited to those enrolled. Community involvement also depended on the location, size, and accessibility of the community. On Rarotonga, the community was far more accessible than Tautai’s audience in New Zealand or even Auckland, where the target audience is spread out across a large city. While community engagement was not essential to the success of residencies, it was an indication of extended investment and developing dynamic networks for visual artists in Oceania.

Community involvement was influenced by the residency location as well as the artists. In Papua New Guinea and Fiji, the artists were local, which facilitated community engagement through local networks, whereas visiting artists relied on the sponsors to initiate connecting them with the community. Tautai’s residency was essentially reliant on its member artists to connect with the visiting artists because there was not an institutional environment where the artist in residence was based. Creative New Zealand was more assertive about how it would connect artists in residence with communities. Creative New Zealand’s residencies in the Cook Islands and Sāmoa used workshops as a means of fostering meaningful interactions and engagements with the community. (Tangaroa 2000) Workshops conducted by artists in residence were a practical and efficient means of involving the community in residencies, meeting sponsors’ and artists’ objectives, and were often facilitated with support from a local artist, whether Mahiriki Tangaroa or others like Michael Tavioni who conducted a two-week carving workshop with Fatu Feu’u in 2001. The Bank of the Cook Islands residency (2002-2003), on the other hand, was essentially a community response to the externally sponsored residencies to support local artistic production and exchange through the most direct means possible: funding for local artists’ residencies. Although a local initiative, Beachcomber Contemporary Art has not required community involvement through its residency. As a private residency with no public funding, Beachcomber Contemporary Art is not obligated to host community events and so it is up to the artist. Leleisi’uaio (2009) used the opportunity to engage with local artists on a personal level and so there was not necessarily a sense of reciprocal exchange with the community.
Community outreach can also extend beyond the host community. Jeffry Feeger’s efforts to share the inspiration and skills he acquired in Auckland were evidence that Tautai’s residency facilitated community engagement on both local and regional levels because his first project after the residency was to arrange an exhibition in Port Moresby. Feeger demonstrated that even an external residency can affect artists’ home communities. The way an artist engaged with an institution and/or community was dependent on the artist’s personal aspirations and background. These characteristics were evident in Feeger’s approach to his residency because he took his mentor Daniel Waswas’ guidance seriously and saw the Tautai residency award as a responsibility to represent Papua New Guinean artists and the country, not just himself. Not even halfway through his residency in Auckland, Feeger said that he was already certain there would be lasting benefits:

[A residency] provides the motivation for other artists… it gives them something to work towards, to continue the practice. Otherwise, you have more and more artists chucking in the towel [asking]… ‘Why continue to do this when I’m not recognised?’… But these artist residencies… keep the motivation there for those artists to continue their practice. So I think it’s really important that Tautai continue, they must continue. For me, myself, my personal experience just being here, and going back, it’s going to change my whole life, my whole aspect of where I’m looking at art from, and how I can change and motivate other artists as well. So, there definitely will be a snowball effect because I communicate with the other artists. And… just knowing that I’ve gone overseas for an artist residency can inspire them as well. (Feeger 2009a)

Feeger’s remarks relate to the importance of having residencies in Oceania. Although artists are more mobile today than in 1969 and can access opportunities outside of their home region, residencies in Oceania reach communities, extend networks, and provide evidence of local or regional opportunities for visual artists. The ability to practice in their home country and/or region is an influential factor for those considering a career in arts because, as Feeger commented, why would artists choose to commit to a career that is not valued within their society?

Feeger recognised the contributions by artists like Mathias Kauage and Jakupa Ako: “Our artists are our visionaries, they are the creators of our culture, they provide national identity, they provide direction and leadership.” (Artist Spotlight: A short Q & A with Jeffry Feeger 2010) Feeger’s comments reflect the guiding achievements of his predecessors in Papua New Guinea in the 1970s and demonstrate that residencies need to evolve over time to continue to develop and strengthen arts communities in Oceania. Offering residencies in Oceania has valued the contributions of artists not through a
single transaction of purchasing an art work but investing in artists’ creative vision and paying tribute to their role in the institution, community, and society in general.

An advantage of long-term residencies was that community engagement was continuous, not just for a few months a year. This is not to say that art stopped after artists in residence left places like the Cook Islands and Sāmoa, because those places had local artist communities established before the onset of residencies. Likewise, in Papua New Guinea and Fiji, there were arts communities before the initial residencies but it was the residencies that provided formal recognition of visual artists’ contributions. Those residencies have also provided incentive for artists to pursue or continue careers locally; for example, Tim Buchanan’s Bank of the Cook Islands residency granted him the resources to create new work but, perhaps more importantly, recognised his contribution to Cook Islands’ art.

**Artists and cultural influences**

The case studies demonstrated that developing their artistic practice in Oceania was important to a number of the artists in residence, particularly John Pule and Josaia McNamara at the Oceania Centre, and Veronica Vaevae, Sylvia Marsters, and Tim Buchanan in the Cook Islands. The artistic and cultural exchange that was possible through residencies was meaningful in that it connected artists to their cultural heritage. But, indigeneity has become transposed as ‘culture’ in these residencies, and it has affected participation and the art produced.

The examples of art works included throughout the case studies can, by and large, be described as non-traditional urban art. Although non-traditional, the art often included a combination of customary and contemporary influences. In Papua New Guinea and Fiji, artists in residence drew from local cultural knowledge to inform contemporary art forms that became associated with national (Papua New Guinea) or regional (Oceania Centre) agendas. The later residencies in the Cook Islands, Sāmoa, and New Zealand based criteria on ethnicity so that, as Anton Carter remarked, New Zealand-based artists of Pacific heritage had opportunities for “reconnecting culturally” and developing new networks for exchange. (Carter 2009) In theory, such criteria directed resources towards indigenous artists, but to what extent has the condition of heritage influenced the art produced? The established artists that applied for residencies for artists of Pacific heritage already incorporated customary motifs and designs or focused on issues related to identity, such as Jim Vivieaere. Therefore, during the
residency, their art works continued to incorporate local motifs and/or subject matter. Fatu Feu'u, for instance, incorporated Cook Islands tattoo motifs into his paintings and the environment and light in Rarotonga influenced his palette and subject matter (fig. 4.7). Marsters’ subject matter was not based on customary designs or motifs, but she stressed that the floral imagery was inspired by and related to her Cook Islands heritage and the compositions that she introduced depended on tivaevae (figs. 4.11 and 4.13). Filipe Tohi’s lalava is another example of connecting culturally. Tohi recognised the significance of lashing in both Tonga and the Cook Islands and made that a means for him to connect with local artists during the residency. He drew from examples of traditional Cook Islands lashing for his lalava practice (fig. 4.16). Tohi also did the same in Fiji while visiting the Oceania Centre. Andy Leleisi’uao, on the other hand, did not expect to make cultural connections through the Beachcomber Contemporary Art residency. Nevertheless, being in Rarotonga inspired him and references to his Pacific heritage emerged, such as pea (Samoan male tattoo) and lei (flower garland), in some of the paintings produced there. For Jordan Souza, Tautai’s criterion of Pacific heritage prompted him to contemplate and challenge the complexities of indigeneity in relation to colonial legacies in Oceania. While this was not expressed through an art work, it is a relevant example of the influence of the criteria.

The Oceania Centre’s artists in residence were encouraged to look to traditions and history to create contemporary imagery and were provided with Pule’s example of emulating hiapo or barkcloth to present visual narratives. As a result, there were thematic and stylistic similarities amongst the artists, such as Toganivalu’s (fig. 3.15) and McNamara’s (fig. 3.16) utilisation of customary images and motifs from masi and carvings, or even Fong’s references to the ocean even in politically charged sculptures (fig. 3.23). In the case of the Oceania Centre and Cook Islands, residencies therefore seem to have compelled indigenous artists to refer to or replicate quintessential images associated with heritage or culture. While I support Vaevae’s and Tavioni’s comments that heritage criterion does not benefit residencies because artistic and cultural exchange can occur on many levels regardless of heritage, the case studies suggest that heritage has been an important point for connection for artists in residence.

Artists such as Vaevae and Marsters, even Vivieaere to an extent, applied for residencies to (re)connect with cultural heritage, not necessarily ethnicity but a genealogical connection. Vaevae and Marsters introduced new methods of representing their heritage: new media and alternate symbolism – flora rather than customary motifs.
In this sense, the introduction of new artists, from different parts of a country or region, has been a means of provoking and challenging local artists. Residencies in Oceania remained strongly influenced by the European models they were derived from, so the format did not necessarily engage indigenous epistemologies as Wendt and Hau‘ofa wanted. But, the artists in residence employed local epistemologies through their consciousness of cultural exchange through the residency. The cultural or genealogical links have benefited artistic production and exchange because the residency is centred on indigenous artists, which is a means of counteracting residual colonisation in Oceania, albeit a minor one.

Representing culture through contemporary art was not simply replicating customary motifs but connecting customary and contemporary subjects and themes through new media and techniques. Stylistic developments were associated with the shifting social and political relationships and situations that have influenced life in Oceania, particularly in regards to colonisation and self-determination. As art historian John Picton noted in regards to contemporary African art: “modernities were invariably framed within the resistance movements that had their origins at the very same time as the imposition of colonial rule. Within the conditions and institutions of local modernity, therefore, modernism in visual practice and resistance as political practice have a common history.” (Picton 2005, 57) For example, residencies in Papua New Guinea, particularly those initiated by Craig at the Creative Arts Centre became a place where pan-Papua New Guinean identity was explored and depicted through visual art works. Craig “considered it imperative for future political development that young Papua New Guineans be taught respect for traditional village life and skills.” (Rosi 1994, 120) He felt that it was essential for artists to create imagery that reflected the dynamism of Papua New Guinean cultures. (Rosi 1994, 120) When taking into account the historical context, the indigenous criterion applied by most residencies in Oceania has been critical in establishing an enabling environment that distinguished and paid tribute to indigeneity and self-determination in post-colonial Oceania. Furthermore, this is a reminder of why it is significant that these residency programmes are based in Oceania.

Establishing and maintaining residencies in Oceania has been a means of promoting arts and fostering arts industries. ‘Residency’ is an internationally recognised term that indicates achievement and professionalism; thus, they contributed to professional standing (social) and lead to further opportunities (artistic and economic). The social and economic circumstances were particularly relevant during residencies
before the turn of the century. For instance, at the time of self-governance, Papua New Guinea was building industries independently from its colonial administrator, Australia. In Fiji, Hau'ofa avoided assimilation to create a ‘safe-space’ for artistic production and raised the status of artists by associating them with the university, under terms that he believed were advantageous for the artists. Hau'ofa established a commercial outlet through the Oceania Centre for the Red Wave Collective with an aspect of exclusivity by identifying the visual artists with John Pule while also remaining somewhat obscure by his lack of advertisement. This was utilised to raise the value of the art works because Hau'ofa’s reputation attracted patrons beyond the regular university and local elite audience that attended the Oceania Centre’s exhibitions. The Oceania Centre did not advertise to tourists, although tourists would not be turned away, they would have to happen upon the centre or someone that knew it to find it. The Cook Islands, on the other hand, invested substantial government funding in tourism, which benefited the artists because tourists purchased art works and the influx of visitors also meant that there was a wider audience. However, residencies in the Cook Islands, Sāmoa, and the Tautai residency in New Zealand occurred in different social and economic situations from the earlier examples. The Cook Islands’ situation demonstrated arts infrastructure coming to fruition, attributable to the efforts, including residencies, of returned artists such as Ian George, Mahiriki Tangaroa, Eruera Nia, and Ani O’Neill amongst others. Sāmoa, on the other hand, did not have a highly developed infrastructure for contemporary arts when Creative New Zealand and NUS initiated the residency; instead, there was more focus on customary Samoan styles and practices. As stated in Chapter V, Penehuro Papalii encouraged students to focus on Samoan legends to gain the trust and love of Samoans because he felt it would take time and patience to develop contemporary art in Sāmoa. (Papalii 2009) Papalii’s method is similar to Hau'ofa’s encouragement for artists to draw from history and traditions for inspiration. Hau'ofa observed that in the search for unity, it was necessary to be culturally secure and confident in the varied heritage of Oceania. (Hau'ofa 2008b, 131-132) Hau'ofa’s vision for a unified Oceania may seem idealistic, but the meaningful experiences of artists in residence demonstrate the relevance of cultural exchange throughout Oceania.

Wendt, Hau’ofa, and Hereniko held similar opinions regarding the importance of arts across Oceania for representing and connecting its people. In raising the status of contemporary visual artists, it was essential to recognise that artists were not simply
producing tourist art but representing culture and contemporary life for a range of audiences. Commercialisation associated with contemporary art was a repercussion of social changes and the advent of capitalist markets in Oceania. In 1980, Hereniko wrote:

> With the commercialization of art comes the ascendancy of Western concepts, attitudes and values of art. Since the market determines the kind and form of art produced, and the market is mainly Euro-American, it is obvious it is white values which really dictate the standards... If islanders are made to feel their art is primitive, uncivilized and inferior, then sooner or later they will end up imitating what they think is superior. (1986, 62-64)

Residencies have helped overcome the challenges of commercialisation in tourist-driven markets. Although some art markets are driven by tourism and residencies such as those in Rarotonga, which are inextricably linked to creating desirable tourist destinations, residencies offer opportunities for artists to create art work without the pressures of selling it and as a process of developing their art practice, thus fostering self-respect in the artists. In turn, this elevated the value of the art work in the community’s eyes because of the esteem associated with winning a residency. From Akis’ first exhibition in 1969 in Papua New Guinea to Vaevae’s in 2000 or Buchanan’s in 2002 in the Cook Islands and Jim Vivieaere’s in 2009 in Sāmoa, artists in residence have challenged the public and opened audiences’ perceptions to the possibilities of what contemporary art can be.

**Chapter Summary**

An imported or introduced model, artist residencies have been redefined in Oceania to generate enduring effects. I have argued that short-term residencies with independent sponsors or partners are an effective and practical means of supporting visual artists based on the trends of select residency programmes since 1969. Although brief compared to residencies at the Oceania Centre that have lasted a decade, short-term residencies enable long-term investments because, in Pacific Arts Advisor Anton Carter’s words, “we create something not as a means in itself, or the end result, it’s very much about positioning something that would have mutual benefits.” (Carter 2009) Mutual referred to Creative New Zealand and the co-sponsor, as well as artists awarded the residency, in this case artists of Pacific heritage. Moreover, Creative New Zealand’s format of residencies that move from one location to another seems to be an effective means of distributing resources and training. Realistically, though, transferring residency programmes from one place to another requires strategic and dedicated local investment to maintain the momentum as was the case in the Cook Islands. The Cook Islands
Ministry of Cultural Development initiated local residencies but those did not continue after Creative New Zealand discontinued their sponsorship. Beachcomber Contemporary Art has attempted a residency that appears to be successful but with a seven year hiatus between the first and second, its stability is yet to be confirmed. Long-term residencies, whether an open-ended residency at the Creative Arts Centre or Oceania Centre or Akis’ annual residencies at the Creative Arts Centre, offered artists resources and opportunities that would have been difficult to access independently in Papua New Guinea or Fiji.

These characteristics indicate how some residencies in Oceania were pioneering initiatives without definition or precedent. Residencies in Oceania have common characteristics, such as financial support or awards, but the ways that residencies have been redefined demonstrates that one of the benefits of employing the terminology is the potential to communicate status and achievement while adapting the actual format and function to respond locally. Local needs varied over time, depending on local arts infrastructure and financial support. While there was no consistent definition for ‘residency’, the function of the programmes has been consistent: to support artistic development and professionalism amongst contemporary visual artists in Oceania.

Sponsors, artists, and communities must work together for residencies to be successful. If an artist is made to feel secure and comfortable, like Tim Buchanan in the Cook Islands (2002), Jeffry Feeger in Auckland (2008), or Andy Leleisiʻuao in the Cook Islands (2009), the experience and product will reflect that, whatever the form of the residency. This was also the case at the Oceania Centre, where Hauʻoфа endeavoured to provide a secure environment to foster productive artistic exchange and experimentation. What these elements demonstrate is that when someone was personally invested in a residency like Beier, Hauʻoфа, Tangaroa, or Bergman, the artists felt secure and the outcomes reflected that.

Residencies have been particularly valuable for places with limited resources and little, if any, external support for local artists when the programmes began. Furthermore, artist residencies have been alternatives and counterparts to academic schooling. While I do not advocate residencies over schools, I think it is imperative to have other opportunities such as these, which allow for indigenous methods of exchange and creative development by those who feel Western methods do not suit their artistic methodologies. Residencies are one means of supporting artists and are most successful when complemented by other opportunities that also respond to the people, environment, and history of Oceania.
CONCLUSION

The term ‘artist residency’ is a borrowed expression for Oceania; it was adopted and developed to meet local needs and priorities. While the term holds many definitions there is an underlying consistency: residencies offer opportunities for artistic development. They have not been a passing fad in Oceania. On the contrary, residency programmes have had a significant role in the growth of contemporary visual arts in Oceania.

By de-centring this study away from the industrialised capitalist countries in Oceania, except for Tautai’s residency opportunity in New Zealand (Chapter VI), the focus has been on the impact of these programmes on smaller island communities and individuals that many other studies on residencies overlook. (Fall 2002; Hussein and Elwakil 2009; Joly 1996; Zahra) There was ample opportunity to evaluate better known residencies in New Zealand and Hawai‘i, or international programmes that indigenous artists have undertaken outside of the region, rather than what might have initially seemed obscure selections. However, the focus on smaller communities with fewer resources highlights the extensive benefits of relatively low-cost programmes like residencies. This focus has also been a method to highlight the artistic and cultural exchanges that can take place in communities if, as Masako suggested, aesthetic experiences become part of the daily lives of local residents through artist residencies. (Masako 2003, 114)

Employing case studies, rather than an all-inclusive historic purview of existing programmes, allowed me to draw attention to the widespread and transformative effects of different residency formats over time. From residencies at Beier’s home where Akis launched a range of batik and screen-printed fabrics that “became the height of fashion” in 1969 (U. Beier 2005, 73) or workshops at the Michoutouchkine-Pilioko Foundation in 1984 and 1985 where Tongan artist Vaka Poleo met “fellow-artists from other parts of the Pacific… [who] inspired [him], learning from them how to make one’s art relevant to the public in general, both artistically and commercially” (P. Hereniko 1986, 33) to the way that Sylvia Marsters’ presence in Rarotonga in 2003 reminded Michael Tavioni that “our sea and people are full of colour and the smiles and millions of different colours.” (Tavioni 2009) The feedback from sponsors, artists in residence, participants of workshops, and external observers or reviewers of the residencies confirmed that the
residency programmes enriched the host community and, for visiting artists, home communities.

The case studies have confirmed my proposal that residencies are productive means for supporting artists and artistic exchange not because there is a single ideal form, but because they can incorporate a range of criteria and components to enable sponsors to work within available resources to meet specific local objectives. Nevertheless, residencies are only one type of programme to encourage professional development and facilitate artistic exchange. They are not a substitute for educational programmes that provide technical training and historical and theoretical context. The case studies have demonstrated ways that residencies can complement educational routes and have provided professional development opportunities for artists who do not want or are not able to enrol in degree programmes. In this conclusion, the outcomes presented throughout the case studies and Chapter VII are considered in relation to international residency programmes to emphasise the importance of maintaining residency programmes in Oceania, because supporting contemporary arts through local and regional programmes has strengthened local arts communities and creative industries rather than encouraging artists to seek external resources and opportunities.

The various residency schemes have affected all of the artists and communities included in this thesis, yet in the international realm of residencies, programmes in Oceania have been overlooked. International residency networking organisations such as Res Artis, Trans Artists, Residency Unlimited, and Alliance of Artist Communities promote hundreds of international residencies but do not reference any of the programmes featured in my case studies, only a select few New Zealand and Australian residencies. This reminder of the breadth of residencies worldwide substantiates the notion that the programmes included in this thesis have functioned independently of global networks. Rather, workshops and residencies in Oceania have stimulated the development of local and regional networks of artists. The detachment of residencies in Oceania from international associations also confirms that, aside from the terminology, they were not modelled on mainstream programmes. However, these models may provide examples for sponsors and programme directors elsewhere to consider, and for those researching residencies to take into account when assessing international residency development or trends.
Future networks of residencies

The inherent freedom of residencies in Oceania allowed artistic practices and exchanges to evolve organically according to the conditions. Even though the sponsors, communities, and artists imposed their ideas or vision for what the residency should be, the actual experience developed according to the participants’ artistic vision and interactions (or lack of). Sponsors stipulated criteria and requirements when initiating programmes, but in most cases, they handed control over to the artists who were the ones who decided how the experience unfolded and evolved. For instance, when Jim Vivieaere proposed research at the Robert Louis Stevenson Museum for his residency at the National University of Sāmoa (NUS) (2008) (Chapter V), he never imagined the various projects that would evolve as a result of his experience. (Vivieaere 2008b)

Another example is Jeffry Feeger who used the gift of time provided by the Tautai residency (2009) (Chapter VI) for professional networking which led to a range of international exhibition opportunities. The necessity to relinquish control and trust in the artist and, at times, the community was a characteristic that gave residencies potential for unexpected and innovative exchange. This is a characteristic of residencies worldwide: the majority have criteria in order to meet certain objectives but once an artist is in residence, control is largely conferred to the artist. Although a prominent feature of the short-term residencies, it was less the case with long-term residencies. Hau’ofa maintained influence over the artists in residence at the Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture (Chapter III). He and Beier (Chapter II) influenced the artists in residence who worked with them, which made those residencies similar to workshops because there was a loosely prescribed methodology based on the sponsor’s standards.

Residencies have transformed over time according to the conditions, needs, and resources available in Oceania – from long-term chiefly internal residencies such as those in Port Moresby and at the Oceania Centre that had a prominent role in shaping artists’ styles and techniques, to shorter external exchanges of other residencies (Chapters IV, V, and VI) that had various roles for the artists in residence and host communities, including developing relationships amongst artists, as well as providing training and introducing new styles and techniques in a more transient manner. These trends indicate that independently sponsored short-term residencies are a practical and effective format for Oceania (Chapter VII). An immediate change in sponsorship from organisations and government agencies seems remote, particularly because governments and intergovernmental agencies are the entities with the means to support these types of
programmes. Moreover, several of these programmes continue. For example, Vilsoni Hereniko has maintained a similar format of residencies for the Oceania Centre for Arts, Culture, and Pacific Studies at the University of the South Pacific (USP). (V. Hereniko 2010) However, the addition of academic courses at the Oceania Centre and academic appointments for Pacific Studies as well as a Visual Arts Coordinator are inevitably changing the dynamics of the centre. Beachcomber Contemporary Art’s residency is one example of a privately sponsored programme but is exclusive since residencies are only offered at the discretion of the director. If Fatu Feu'u begins his private residency in Poutasi, Sāmoa in 2011, it may be an example of an independent residency format that draws from multiple funding sources: personal, private, and governmental. Feu'u has a variety of experiences from different residencies he has undertaken, which he can draw from to design an effective residency. Artists will be required to pay or obtain their own funding for the opportunity to create work at the residential art centre. This type of at-cost format is common amongst international residency programmes. Feu'u’s proposed programme will be the first of its type in Oceania. This is an example of potential for new directions for residency programmes in the region; it could attract a wider range of artists including writers and musicians. Considering this, I offer some thoughts on possibilities for extending the capacity of artist residencies in Oceania.

To offer potential directions for residencies in Oceania, I return to Epeli Hau'ofa’s vision of a sea of islands interconnected by the vast Pacific Ocean. (Hau'ofa et al. 1993) Hau'ofa’s vision was idealistic and unrealistic at certain levels, but that does not mean it cannot be considered as a starting point for networks of creative exchange. If sponsors, artists, and communities use the idea of an interconnected sea of islands as a map for charting potential creative intersections across Oceania, they could develop a network of residencies. A cooperative network of residencies could lead to the next stage of adapting residencies to suit artistic needs in Oceania. Like residencies themselves, networks of residencies are a European model that enables programmes to share knowledge and resources while also extending sponsors’ reach beyond their immediate communities. For instance, organisations such as Trans Artists and Res Artis in the Netherlands and Residency Unlimited and Alliance of Artists Communities in the United States connect sponsors and hosts with potential candidates, provide advice for artists, and offer search tools for the public to access profiles of residencies through their
respective websites, publications, and conferences. Additionally, sponsors and artists in residence share their experiences through the websites. The residencies featured on the networking websites are not limited to the countries that fund them, but work locally and internationally. There is potential for a virtual network for Oceania with the intention that such an information hub would facilitate resource sharing and attract more funding for residency sponsors because a central organisation or group could coordinate information and statistics regarding the achievements and benefits of residency programmes. I suggest a virtual network for practical and fiscal purposes because multiple contributors in different locations can manage an Internet presence. The participating residencies might be affiliated with universities, museums, cultural centres, private galleries, or private businesses, as is the case with Fatu Feu’u’s proposed residency.

Arts organisations in Oceania should not directly replicate the European networks but examine what aspects might be effective in Oceania, in the same way that sponsors, artists, and communities have already transformed residency formats to function for artists in Oceania as discussed throughout this thesis. A virtual network would initiate a dynamic system of sharing information and resources that could lead to coordinated programming in the future for reciprocal and/or multi-directional residencies.

My case studies have demonstrated that residencies have been a practical and effective means of supporting visual artists in Oceania since 1969 yet there have been few inter-organisational reciprocal residencies. One example of a reciprocal residency exchange is Creative New Zealand’s biennial Toi Oahu residency (2005-2009) with the University of Hawai’i at Mānoa, for Māori artists to undertake residencies in Hawai’i and Kanaka Maoli artists to go to New Zealand, which has been a success means for integrating arts components at the Kamakahūokalani Centre for Hawaiian Studies. (Andrade 2006, 2010; Carter 2008c; Creative New Zealand 2008c; Grant 2005; Riddell 2007; Toi Oahu 2009) The National University of Sāmoa requested reciprocal exchange when Creative New Zealand proposed a residency in 2006, which demonstrates the desire for reciprocal residency exchanges. Reciprocal residencies would be particularly beneficial for communities without art training institutions, as was the case in the Cook Islands, because artists might have opportunities not available in their home

communities. A network would further expand the potential of residencies from reciprocal to multi-directional exchanges. For instance, establishing residencies in Papua New Guinea, Kiribati, Vanuatu, and Sāmoa that artists from any of the participating or sponsoring countries could apply for would expand the potential exchanges and invoke awareness of the region’s diversity as well as discourse on cultural, social, political, and environmental issues. As stated at various points in the thesis, large islands like Papua New Guinea and New Caledonia face different issues and obstacles from atoll nations like Kiribati or Tokelau. By connecting a wide range of artists, new versions and visions of contemporary Oceanic art could emerge potentially realising Hau‘ofa’s vision for artists in the region.

The case studies indicated that residencies can be relatively low-cost, particularly if multiple sponsors contribute. For instance, the Cook Islands Ministry of Cultural Development was able to initiate two residencies with different co-sponsors – Creative New Zealand and the Bank of the Cook Islands (Chapter IV). The Ministry of Cultural Development’s residencies were able to bring New Zealand-based artists to Rarotonga for artistic exchange and to provide training and interaction with the local arts community, as well as afford local artists a similar opportunity to celebrate and share their artistic contribution, promote professional development, and enjoy a profile on the same level as artists from New Zealand. Once a format was developed that responded to the needs of the sponsors and community, it was relatively easy to replicate for subsequent initiatives. Therefore, this idea of replication and extension could form a basis to develop a network of artist residencies throughout Oceania. This proposition for a network is based on the theory that residencies are a vehicle for artistic exchange across Oceania not just from New Zealand to the islands or vice versa but multi-directionally. The reality is that lack of funding and human resources are major obstacles.

A problem with this proposition is the need for an organisation to manage such a network. Since there are a limited number of residency programmes in Oceania, a network could be an information hub rather than a formal agency or corporation. Centralised organisations for connecting artist residencies exist on national and regional levels beyond just the United States and Europe. Initiatives have begun to develop Latin American residency networks and to map programmes throughout Central America. (Arts Collaboratory 2010; Res Artis 2011; residencias_en_rede 2011) Similar projects have successfully connected artist residency programmes throughout Southeast Asia, Africa, and Eastern Europe. By developing regional networks to connect residency
programmes, these areas have invested in artistic development programmes rather than encouraging artists to leave their home region for professional development or rely on external resources to further their careers. This is a long-term investment to strengthen creative industries.

Artist residencies in Oceania are a small fraction of those worldwide, but have significantly impacted the careers of visual artists because the programmes have been alternatives and complements to academic programmes. Nevertheless, residencies have conferred a sense of professional status on the artists because sponsors have recognised their contribution and provided resources – financial and technical, which has encouraged artists to pursue professional development within the region. Artist residencies have been an integral part of the development of contemporary visual arts in Oceania for more than a generation. Residencies were developed to respond to the lack of training opportunities in Oceania and increase the potential of creative empowerment and expression but there is more that residencies can achieve in the future, particularly if sponsors, artists, and communities collaborate. There are innovative artists and groups that create outside institutional frameworks, endeavouring to foster artistic development outside colonial legacies to further the possibilities for indigenous artists in Oceania.
APPENDICES

Appendix A provides supplemental information to Chapter II to highlight recent residency opportunities for Papua New Guinean artists outside of the country. Appendices B and C provide alphabetised glossaries of the artists and sponsors included in the case studies. Appendix D presents a table of residencies, organised chronologically, for artists in Oceania including, but not limited to, examples included in the case studies.

APPENDIX A – RECENT RESIDENCIES FOR PAPUA NEW GUINEA ARTISTS IN OTHER LOCATIONS

In conjunction with the donation of the Jolika Collection of New Guinea Art to the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco’s de Young Museum in 2005, the museum established the Jolika Fellowship Programme, which enables visual artists to hold an artist residency, access the collection, and conduct research at the museum. The Jolika Collection consists of more than 350 works collected over forty years by Marcia and John Friede and is named in honour of their children. (Hellmich 2010) The fellowship is offered to artists from Papua New Guinea and West Papua. Three of the ten recipients have been contemporary visual artists: Daniel Waswas (2006), Martin Morububuna (2009), and Purago Marabe (2009). I also make reference to performance artist Michael Mel’s 2007 residency. Art production is not a requirement for the award; museum professionals and scholars are also invited to apply. The programme began in 2006, at a time when opportunities for artists within Papua New Guinea were only a fraction of what they had been in the 1970s and 1980s. Unlike the informal residencies for which artists were extended invitations by Beier or Craig, the museum requires applicants to specify a specific project, fill out application forms, and obtain recommendations. These procedures highlighted the significant differences from the local grassroots residencies in Port Moresby. The Jolika Fellowship is typically one month but is determined by the proposed project and provides airfare, lodging, and living stipend. (Hellmich 2010)

Daniel Waswas, a Papua New Guinean artist, educator, and founder of GalleryPNG, was the inaugural artist in residence in 2006. Waswas completed his art

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129 There is also an artist in residence programme for Pacific artists at de Young’s art studio and Kimball gallery for one month per year; it is administered by the Education department. (Hellmich 2011)
130 Art Asia Pacific reported that the Jolika Collection was at the centre of controversy at the time of Waswas’ residency because the provenance of several of its donated artefacts came into question when certain items were deemed to have been exported illegally. “Although the controversy has yet to be
training in New Zealand, earning a Bachelor of Arts at Whitecliffe College and Masters of Fine Arts at Elam School of Fine Arts, University of Auckland. Waswas did not produce art work during the residency at de Young. He said that it was more of a visual anthropology residency than what he expected of an artist residency because he spent most of his time accessing the museum’s extensive collection of Melanesian artefacts and was expected to give talks and discuss the collection with staff and visitors. (Waswas 2010)

Waswas explained that it was an eye-opening experience because he was able to see artefacts he had never seen before. (Waswas 2010) He was encouraged to offer his insights about the collection to the staff. However, he felt they were disappointed because, rather than confirming the considerable value of the collection, he told them that without ritual the objects lost cultural value. In his own words:

in order for something to be sacred it has to have a connotation or link to where it is it was and how it was performed and who used and … now I see [an artefact in the Jolika collection] as a visual anthropology object that does not have any sacred link any more… [Because] sacredness comes in with ritual, comes in with beliefs, comes in with faith. At the moment, there are no Papua New Guineans here to continue to make it sacred… So I made them realise that it was a visual object only now. (Waswas 2010)

From his description, it appears that the staff hoped that the visitors from Papua New Guinea would be able to shed new light on works in the collection whereas he expected that it would be an opportunity for an artist to develop his artistic practice. Waswas confirmed that the residency was beneficial to him as an educator, if not an artist. Upon his return to Port Moresby, he established a course in visual anthropology with a French anthropologist Dr. Nicolas Garnier based on some of his research at de Young.

After the residency, Waswas attempted to incorporate imagery based on artefacts from the Jolika Collection into his paintings. He felt that the depictions were unsuccessful because the artefacts were not in use in their natural habitat; rather they became lost in the shadows of the gallery. When considering that Waswas typically paints vibrant scenes of Papua New Guineans adorned with customary *bilas*, as seen in *Reflection* (2005) (fig. A.1), it is understandable that depictions of artefacts never came to fruition. The subjects of Waswas’ paintings are often taken from photographs at festivities in rural areas of Papua New Guinea. Since the Jolika artefacts were separated from the actual ritual, they lost meaning and appeal for Waswas.

resolved, it is likely that the objects will remain in the collection and reparations will be made to the PNG government.” (Kraft 2007, 204-205)
Prominent Papua New Guinean artist and educator Michael Mel was awarded the residency in 2007. Like Waswas, Mel was trained outside of Papua New Guinea. He earned a PhD in Drama and Education from Flinders University of South Australia and is the Director of the Expressive Arts Department at Goroka University. (Campbelltown Arts Centre 2007, 44) Mel used the opportunity of the residency to confront the way museums lock objects in glass cases by inviting visitors to engage with the histories of the objects represented during a performance with objects and the museum staff put on stage while Mel narrated. Mel is primarily a performance artist and so I do not analyse his performance here, rather I use Mel’s responses to the collection as comparison to Waswas. Mel wrote:

objects are not just objects for Papua New Guineans. They are a point of departure or a location to connect to others from within – to diverge or to come together. This idea is very meaningful to us, but also for other cultures where museums display our objects but fail to recognise their spiritual dimensions, their ancestry and their histories – of slavery, of colonisation, of name-calling, of restraining and limiting. I believe that by revisiting our histories, we can create possibilities for building new bridges with people. (Campbelltown Arts Centre 2007, 45)

Mel’s residency ended with a confrontational performance to evoke a dialogue to challenge dominant histories and categories of Papua New Guinean art. Mel used the residency to achieve his “agenda of bringing people together to set minds and spirits free.” (Campbelltown Arts Centre 2007, 44)

Martin Morububuna and Purago Marabe, poet and painter, were awarded the residency in 2009. Unlike his predecessors, Morububuna used the opportunity to create a body of work including Fever of Milamala: from Planting to Harvest to Farewell of the Spirits (fig. 2.21), further developing ideas and imagery that he began in 1986 with murals depicting the Milamala harvest festival in Papua New Guinea. At de Young Museum, he also painted a mural, Legend of Ilakavetega (2009) (fig. A.2), in the gallery to share his pan-Papua New Guinean iconography that, in his words, depicted “the peoples, art, cultures and natural environment from the highlands to the coastal regions of Papua New Guinea.” (Morububuna 2009) His mural created a context for viewers to understand the Papua New Guinean artefacts in the Jolika Collection: it was his intention that it would transcend cultural, social, and political divisions to create a bridge of understanding between the artist and the American audience. (Morububuna 2009) This was likely intended to create a link to the collection by demonstrating how the pieces function in Papua New Guinean villages.
Although not labelled as a residency, de Young Museum’s programme is both an opportunity to support Papua New Guinean visual artists and in some ways it is similar to those in later case studies in the thesis because it provided opportunity for artists to complete a specific project, unlike the residencies in Port Moresby that acted as a career path or an alternative to academic avenues. The Jolika Fellowship reveals a dramatic shift in residencies from the late 1960s to the first decade of 2000, which corresponded to changes to residencies across Oceania. Another fundamental difference is that it is collection based.  

De Young is not the only museum to host artists in residence to engage with Pacific art collections. The British Museum established the Melanesia Project in 2005 to explore relationships between a range of indigenous art forms and artefacts, socially significant narratives, and the indigenous communities from which the historic collections derive. (Melanesia Project 2010) The project included an artist residency to help meet the goal of bringing new perspectives to the study of indigenous art and understanding of ownership, heritage, and relations between museums and communities. Trobriand Islander Samuel Luguna was awarded the inaugural residency in 2006. During the three-week residency, he worked with objects from the Trobriand Islands dating back to 1895. He produced two paintings depicting armbands (mwali) and a necklace (soulava), “shell ornaments which are culturally significant to his home province” (fig. A.3).

In 2006, the Melanesia Project hosted ni-Vanuatu artist Ralph Regenvanu, former director of the Vanuatu Cultural Centre. Regenvanu also included artefacts from the museum’s collection in his painting The Melanesian Project (2006) (fig. A.4). He chose to paint a scene in which the British Museum and ceremonial ground (nasara) in his home village of Malakula converged. In a different approach to Waswas and Luguna, he depicted artefacts from the British Museum’s collection across the painting including a Rapa Nui moai (Hoa Hakananai’a), slit drum from Ambrym island in Vanuatu, and figure from northeast Malakula island in Vanuatu. Regenvanu explained that the painting was a means of repatriation: “It is an aspect of my cultural heritage coming out of the British Museum and returning to the place of its origin. In fact, by using this design in this painting I am repatriating it.” (Regenvanu 2006) Connecting indigenous artists with art works and artefacts produced by their ancestors is not an answer to repatriation debates.

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131 These are not the only external residencies that Papua New Guineans have undertaken, Jeffry Feeger’s residency in Auckland in 2009 features in Chapter VI, the final case study.
but, for an artist like Regenvanu, it provided an important and beneficial opportunity to bond with an aspect of his cultural heritage.

The de Young Museum and British Museum have utilised artist residencies as a means of promoting dialogue between museums and indigenous communities by opening collections to indigenous artists. These examples demonstrate yet another way that residencies have created opportunities for artists from Oceania. These programmes demonstrate a commitment by international institutions to provide indigenous artists access to culturally significant collections. For artists that find inspiration in traditions and customs, like Luguna and Regenvanu, these residencies generated valuable opportunities to connect with objects produced by the artists’ ancestors; whereas Waswas and Mel used the opportunity to critique the museum space and the disconnection from living Papua New Guinea culture and customs.
APPENDIX B: ARTISTS

**Artists in residence and participants of workshops** (alphabetical by surname)


Timothy Akis: Papua New Guinean artist, held first residency at Beiers’ home in 1969 then annual residencies with Craig at the Creative Art Centre and National Arts School until 1976.


Tim Buchanan: New Zealand-born Cook Islander painter and cartoonist based in Rarotonga, he held the Ministry of Cultural Development and Bank of the Cook Islands residency (2003).

Jeffry Feeger: Papua New Guinean painter, the inaugural Tautai residency (2009) was his first residency.

Fatu Feu'u: New Zealand-based Samoan artist has held multiple residencies including the Cook Islands Ministry of Cultural Development and Creative New Zealand residency (2002). He intends to commence a private residency in Poutasi, Sāmoa in 2011.

Peni Saimone ‘Ben’ Fong: Fijian/Chinese metal sculptor and a full time artist in residence and technician at the Oceania Centre since 1997.

Mathias Kauage: Papua New Guinean painter mentored by Georgina and Ulli Beier during his first residency at their home in 1969 and throughout a lifelong friendship with them; he also held residencies at the Creative Arts Centre during the 1970s.

Mason Lee: Fijian/Chinese painter held a residency at the Oceania Centre from 2000 until 2008 and a brief residency in Tahiti in 2006.

Andy Leleisiʻua: New Zealand-born Samoan painter held the Beachcomber Contemporary Art residency (2009) as well as several residencies in New Zealand, Australia, and Taiwan.

Samuel Luguna: Solomon Islander painter, inaugural artist in residence for Melanesia Project at the British Museum in 2006.

Purago Marabe: Papua New Guinean painter and poet was the 2009 Jolika Fellow at de Young Museum with Morububuna.

Katarina Mataira: Māori artist and educator, conducted workshops for the University of the South Pacific in the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Sāmoa in 1975 and the Tonga Regional Visual Arts Workshop in 1976.

Para Matchitt: Māori artist and educator facilitated the Tonga Regional Visual Arts Workshop in 1976.


Josaia McNamara: Fijian painter held a residency at the Oceania Centre from 2000 until 2009 and the Commonwealth Connections Residency in Bangladesh (2008).

Michael Mel: Papua New Guinean performance artist and educator (PhD Flinders University and Director of the Expressive Arts Department at Goroka University) was the 2007 Jolika Fellow at de Young Museum.

Martin Morububuna: Papua New Guinean painter that joined the Creative Arts Centre as an artist in residence in 1974 and also held residencies at the National Museum of Papua New Guinea (1992) and de Young Museum (2009).

Eruera ‘Ted’ Nia: New Zealand-born Cook Islander filmmaker and sculptor held the inaugural Ministry of Cultural Development and Bank of the Cook Islands residency (2002) and he is director of Inanui Gallery in Rarotonga.

Ani O’Neill: New Zealand-born Cook Islander artist and educator based in Rarotonga held residencies in New Zealand, Australia, and the United States.

Selwyn Palmer: Solomon Islander painter and tattoo artist was Tautai’s 2011 artist in residence.


John Pule: New Zealand-based Niuean painter, poet, and novelist held various international residencies including two at the Oceania Centre (1998 and 2001); he was also Acting Director of the centre in 2005.

Ralph Regenvanu: ni-Vanuatu artist and politician, former Director of the Vanuatu Cultural Centre, and artist in residence for the Melanesia Project at the British Museum in 2006.

Jordan Souza: Hawaiian sculptor and tattoo artist held the Tautai residency (2010).

Mahiririki Tangaroa: New Zealand-born Cook Islander photographer, painter, and curator initiated and administered residencies in Rarotonga and she was the inaugural artist in residence at Beachcomber Contemporary Art (2002).

Dickson Taumata: Solomon Islander sculptor was artist in residence at USP in Suva (1976).
Michael Tavioni: Cook Islander master carver and contemporary artist based in Rarotonga and hosted sculpture workshops at his studio with Fatu Feu'u in 2002.

Josua Toganivalu: Fijian painter, graphic designer, and educator; he was artist in residence at the Oceania Centre from 1998-2005 and continues participation with the Red Wave Collective.

Filipe Tohi: New Zealand-based Tongan multi-media artist and tufunga lalava (expert of lashing) held numerous residencies including the Cook Islands Ministry of Cultural Development and Creative New Zealand (2004) and the Oceania Centre (2006 and 2007) residencies as well as others in the United States and Japan.

Michel Tuffery: New Zealand-born Samoan/Cook Islands/Tahitian artist that has held more than ten residencies in places such as New Zealand, Australia, the United States, and Taiwan.


Jim Vivicaere: New Zealand-born Cook Islander artist and curator that held the National University of Sāmoa and Creative New Zealand artist residency (2009) as well as others in France and Taiwan.

Daniel Waswas: Papua New Guinean painter and educator was the inaugural Jolika Fellow at de Young Museum (2006).
Sponsors and advisors to artist residency programmes: (alphabetical by surname)

Georgina Beier: English artist initiated artist residencies in her home in Port Moresby in 1969 and advised Hau'ofa in 1997 regarding establishment of the first residencies at the Oceania Centre.

Ulli Beier: German writer and educator taught at the University of Papua New Guinea from the late 1960s to early 1970s and advised Hau'ofa for establishing the first residencies at the Oceania Centre.

Ben Bergman: Owner and director of Beachcomber Contemporary Art initiated residencies for local and international artists in Rarotonga, Cook Islands.

Rose Campbell: Programmes manager for Creative New Zealand led assessment of residency at the National University of Sāmoa in 2009.

Anton Carter: Pacific Arts Advisor for Creative New Zealand (1998 – 2010) was directly involved with establishing and administering Creative New Zealand’s residencies in the Cook Islands and Sāmoa.

Tom Craig: Scottish artist based in Papua New Guinea from 1964 until 1983. He was the founding director of the Creative Arts Centre (1972-1976) and National Arts Centre (1976-1983) where he instituted artist residency programmes.

Epenesa Esera: Dean of Education at National University of Sāmoa and member of artist residency committee.

Walter Fraser: Former Registrar at the University of the South Pacific (2000-2007) and current Director of Pacific Studies at the University of Auckland (2009- present).

Ian George: New Zealand-born Cook Islands artist and educator based in Rarotonga advised both Creative New Zealand and the Cook Islands Ministry of Cultural Development in different capacities about residencies.

Epeli Hau'ofa: Anthropologist, poet, satirist, and educator instituted artist residencies as the founder and director of the Oceania Centre (1997-2009).

Vilsoni Hereniko: Playwright, filmmaker, former director of the Centre for Pacific Studies at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and director of the Oceania Centre for Arts, Culture and Pacific Studies (2010- present).

Christina Jeffery: Manager of Tautai Contemporary Pacific Arts Trust established and administers its residency.

Nicolai Michoutouchkine: Franco-Russian artist and resident in various parts of Oceania from the early 1960s, conducted numerous art workshops and hosted residencies at the Michoutouchkine-Pliiko Foundation in Vanuatu.

Dawn Rasmussen: Head of Department of Practical and Expressive Arts at National University of Sāmoa.


Deborah White: Owner of Whitespace Contemporary Art gallery and consultant for the development of Tautai’s residency.
## APPENDIX D: VISUAL ARTS RESIDENCIES (arranged by date from earliest)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Residency Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Type of Residency</th>
<th>Application Deadline</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Contact Person(s)</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<td>[Duration 1]</td>
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<td>555-1234</td>
<td><a href="mailto:john.doe@example.com">john.doe@example.com</a></td>
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<td>London</td>
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*Note: Contact information and additional details may be subject to change.*
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