

5th World Summit on Arts and Culture Roundtable – The Indigenous Wisdom of Place Tainui Stephens

Tena koutou.

Ko Whangatauatia te pae maunga
Ko Kariri Kura Te Moana
Ko Ahipara kamehameha te marae
Ko Te Ohaki toku turangawaewae
Ko Te Rarawa te iwi
He uri ahau no Nukutawhiti

Whangatauatia is my mountain
Kariri Kura is my ocean
Ahipara is the land of my people
Te Ohaki is the place where I stand
Te Rarawa is my tribe
I am a descendant of Nukutawhiti

Ko Wai Au – Who Am I?

We Maori call ourselves Tangata Whenua – The People Of The Land. This gives us licence to connect with the truth of the vibrations of nature. This energy has created and determines all that we are and do.

My mountain represents the solidity of our people. The ocean reminds me of the constant ebb and flow of the tide of humanity. The land is from whence I come and defines me. My ancestral meeting house is the place where I can stand with security. I am a child of my tribe. All that we are is embodied in our illustrious ancestry.

He Whakapapa No Te Wa – The Genealogy Of The Times

We come from infinity and we return to infinity. Our genealogy comprises the layers of event, experience and memory that accumulate as new generations are born, live and die. It is a family tree of blood and the times. We all have a place, small though it may be: in that tree.

Toku Reo Toku Ohooho – My Voice Is My Own

My own journey in this world has meant encounters with life as much as death. The accumulation of these experiences has enabled me, in time, to come to know who and what I am. My voice is the means by which I discover my own potential. It enables me to nurture myself and contribute to the betterment of others. I am unique – yet can afford to be humble about that, because *everyone* is unique.

One of the roles of the artist in society is to express a fusion of body, mind, heart and soul - in relation to the circumstances of the moment.

I am a storyteller who works in film and television. One characteristic of my personal voice is that I see the world through a Maori prism. It has enabled me to understand, to see, to hear and to feel. I have been challenged in my life. I have overcome. I know happiness and love.

The wisdom of place is that I know my place.

Mauriora ki a tatou.